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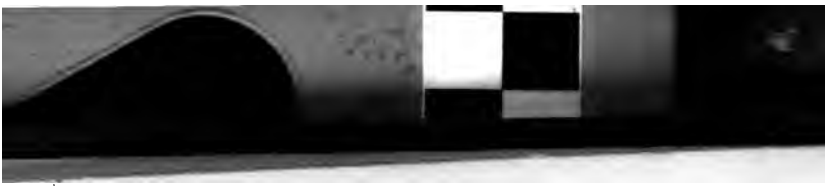
THE WORKS OF THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK, INCLUDING HIS NOVELS, POEMS, FUGITIVE PIECES, CRITICISMS, ETC., WITH A PREFACE BY THE RIGHT HON. LORD HOUGHTON, A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE BY HIS GRAND-DAUGHTER, EDITH NICOLLS, AND PORTRAIT. EDITED BY HENRY COLE, C.B. IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

LONDON: RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON
NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
MDCCCLXXV.



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MAID MARIAN.

[First published in 1822.]

Yet thanks I must you con, that you work not
In holier shapes: for there is boundless theft
In limited professions.—*Timon of Athens.*

MAID MARIAN.

CHAPTER I.

Now come ye for peace here, or come ye for war?—Scott.

"THE abbot, in his alb arrayed," stood at the altar in the abbey-chapel of Rubygill, with all his plump, sleek, rosy friars, in goodly lines disposed, to solemnize the nuptials of the beautiful Matilda Fitzwater, daughter of the Baron of Arlingford, with the noble Robert Fitz-Ooth, Earl of Locksley and Huntingdon. The abbey of Rubygill stood in a picturesque valley, at a little distance from the western boundary of Sherwood Forest, in a spot which seemed adapted by nature to be the retreat of monastic mortification, being on the banks of a fine trout-stream, and in the midst of woodland coverts, abounding with excellent game. The bride, with her father and attendant maidens, entered the chapel; but the earl had not arrived. The baron was amazed, and the bridemaidens were disconcerted. Matilda feared that some evil had befallen her lover, but felt no diminution of her confidence in his honour and love. Through the open gates of the chapel she looked down the narrow road that wound along the side of the hill; and her ear was the first that heard the distant trampling of horses, and her eye was the first that caught the glitter of snowy plumes, and the light of polished spears. "It is strange," thought the baron, "that the earl should come in this martial array to his wedding;" but he had not long to meditate on the phenomenon, for the foaming steeds swept up to the gate like a whirlwind,

and the earl, breathless with speed, and followed by a few of his yeomen, advanced to his smiling bride. It was then no time to ask questions, for the organ was in full peal, and the choristers were in full voice.

The abbot began to intone the ceremony in a style of modulation impressively exalted, his voice issuing most canonically from the roof of his mouth, through the medium of a very musical nose, newly tuned for the occasion. But he had not proceeded far enough to exhibit all the variety and compass of this melodious instrument, when a noise was heard at the gate, and a party of armed men entered the chapel. The song of the choristers died away in a shake of demisemiquavers, contrary to all the rules of psalmody. The organ-blower, who was working his musical air-pump with one hand, and with two fingers and a thumb of the other insinuating a peeping-place through the curtain of the organ-gallery, was struck motionless by the double operation of curiosity and fear; while the organist, intent only on his performance, and spreading all his fingers to strike a swell of magnificent chords, felt his harmonic spirit ready to desert his body on being answered by the ghastly rattle of empty keys, and in the consequent *agitato furioso* of the internal movements of his feelings, was prepared to restore harmony by the *segue subito* of an *appogiatura con foco* with a corner of a book of anthems on the head of his neglectful assistant, when his hand and his attention together were arrested by the scene below. The voice of the abbot subsided into silence through a descending scale of long-drawn melody, like the sound of the ebbing sea to the explorers of a cave. In a few moments all was silence, interrupted only by the iron tread of the armed intruders, as it rang on the marble floor and echoed from the vaulted aisles.

The leader strode up to the altar; and placing himself opposite to the abbot, and between the earl and Matilda, in such a manner that the four together seemed to stand on the four points of a diamond, exclaimed, "In the name of King Henry, I forbid the ceremony, and attach Robert Earl of Huntingdon as a traitor!" and, at the same time, he held his drawn sword between the lovers, as if to emblem that royal authority which laid its temporal ban upon their contract. The earl drew his own sword instantly, and struck down the interposing weapon; then clasped his left arm

round Matilda, who sprang into his embrace, and held his sword before her with his right hand. His yeomen ranged themselves at his side, and stood with their swords drawn, still and prepared, like men determined to die in his defence. The soldiers, confident in superiority of numbers, paused. The abbot took advantage of the pause to introduce a word of exhortation. "My children," said he, "if you are going to cut each other's throats, I entreat you, in the name of peace and charity, to do it out of the chapel."

"Sweet Matilda," said the earl, "did you give your love to the Earl of Huntingdon, whose lands touch the Ouse and the Trent, or to Robert Fitz-Ooth, the son of his mother?"

"Neither to the earl nor his earldom," answered Matilda firmly, "but to Robert Fitz-Ooth and his love."

"That I well knew," said the earl; "and though the ceremony be incomplete, we are not the less married in the eye of my only saint, our Lady, who will yet bring us together. Lord Fitzwater, to your care, for the present, I commit your daughter.—Nay, sweet Matilda, part we must for a while; but we will soon meet under brighter skies, and be this the seal of our faith."

He kissed Matilda's lips, and consigned her to the baron, who glowered about him with an expression of countenance that showed he was mortally wroth with somebody; but whatever he thought or felt he kept to himself. The earl, with a sign to his followers, made a sudden charge on the soldiers, with the intention of cutting his way through. The soldiers were prepared for such an occurrence, and a desperate skirmish succeeded. Some of the women screamed, but none of them fainted; for fainting was not so much the fashion in those days, when the ladies breakfasted on brawn and ale at sunrise, as in our more refined age of green tea and muffins at noon. Matilda seemed disposed to fly again to her lover, but the baron forced her from the chapel. The earl's bowmen at the door sent in among the assailants a volley of arrows, one of which whizzed past the ear of the abbot, who, in mortal fear of being suddenly translated from a ghostly friar into a friarly ghost, began to roll out of the chapel as fast as his bulk and his holy robes would permit, roaring "Sacrilege!" with all his monks at his heels, who were, like himself, more intent to go at once than to stand upon the order of their

going. The abbot, thus pressed from behind, and stumbling over his own drapery before, fell suddenly prostrate in the door-way that connected the chapel with the abbey, and was instantaneously buried under a pyramid of ghostly carcasses, that fell over him and each other, and lay a rolling chaos of animated rotundities, sprawling and bawling in unseemly disarray, and sending forth the names of all the saints in and out of heaven, amidst the clashing of swords, the ringing of bucklers, the clattering of helmets, the twanging of bow-strings, the whizzing of arrows, the screams of women, the shouts of the warriors, and the vociferations of the peasantry, who had been assembled to the intended nuptials, and who, seeing a fair set-to, contrived to pick a quarrel among themselves on the occasion, and proceeded, with staff and cudgel, to crack each other's skulls for the good of the king and the earl. One tall friar alone was untouched by the panic of his brethren, and stood steadfastly watching the combat with his arms akimbo, the colossal emblem of an unarmed neutrality.

At length, through the midst of the internal confusion, the earl, by the help of his good sword, the staunch valour of his men, and the blessing of the Virgin, fought his way to the chapel-gate—his bowmen closed him in—he vaulted into his saddle, clapped spurs to his horse, rallied his men on the first eminence, and exchanged his sword for a bow and arrow, with which he did bold execution among the pursuers, who at last thought it most expedient to desist from offensive warfare, and to retreat into the abbey, where, in the king's name, they broached a pipe of the best wine, and attached all the venison in the larder, having first carefully unpacked the tuft of friars, and set the fallen abbot on his legs.

The friars, it may be well supposed, and such of the king's men as escaped unhurt from the affray, found their spirits a cup too low, and kept the flask moving from noon till night. The peaceful brethren, unused to the tumult of war, had undergone, from fear and discomposure, an exhaustion of animal spirits that required extraordinary refection. During the repast, they interrogated Sir Ralph Montfaucon, the leader of the soldiers, respecting the nature of the earl's offence.

"A complication of offences," replied Sir Ralph, "superinduced on the original basis of forest-treason. He began with

hunting the king's deer, in despite of all remonstrance; followed it up by contempt of the king's mandates, and by armed resistance to his power, in defiance of all authority; and combined with it the resolute withholding of payment of certain moneys to the abbot of Doncaster, in denial of all law; and has thus made himself the declared enemy of church and state, and all for being too fond of venison." And the knight helped himself to half a pasty.

"A heinous offender," said a little round oily friar, appropriating the portion of pasty which Sir Ralph had left.

"The earl is a worthy peer," said the tall friar whom we have already mentioned in the chapel scene, "and the best marksman in England."

"Why this is flat treason, Brother Michael," said the little round friar, "to call an attainted traitor a worthy peer."

"I pledge you," said Brother Michael. The little friar smiled and filled his cup. "He will draw the long-bow," pursued Brother Michael, "with any bold yeoman among them all."

"Don't talk of the long-bow," said the abbot, who had the sound of the arrow still whizzing in his ear: "what have we pillars of the faith to do with the long bow?"

"Be that as it may," said Sir Ralph, "he is an outlaw from this moment."

"So much the worse for the law then," said Brother Michael. "The law will have a heavier miss of him than he will have of the law. He will strike as much venison as ever, and more of other game. I know what I say; but *basta:* Let us drink."

"What other game?" said the little friar. "I hope he won't poach among our partridges."

"Poach! not he," said Brother Michael: "if he wants your partridges, he will strike them under your nose (here's to you), and drag your trout-stream for you on a Thursday evening."

"Monstrous! and starve us on fast-day," said the little friar.

"But that is not the game I mean," said Brother Michael.

"Surely, son Michael," said the abbot, "you do not mean to insinuate that the noble earl will turn freebooter?"

"A man must live," said Brother Michael, "earl or no. If the law takes his rents and beeves without his consent, he

must take beeves and rents where he can get them without the consent of the law. This is the *lex talionis.*"

"Truly," said Sir Ralph, "I am sorry for the damsel: she seems fond of this wild runagate."

"A mad girl, a mad girl," said the little friar.

"How a mad girl?" said Brother Michael. "Has she not beauty, grace, wit, sense, discretion, dexterity, learning, and valour?"

"Learning!" exclaimed the little friar; "what has a woman to do with learning? And valour! who ever heard a woman commended for valour? Meekness, and mildness, and softness, and gentleness, and tenderness, and humility, and obedience to her husband, and faith in her confessor, and domesticity, or, as learned doctors call it, the faculty of stayathomeitiveness, and embroidery, and music, and pickling, and preserving, and the whole complex and multiplex detail of the noble science of dinner, as well in preparation for the table, as in arrangement over it, and in distribution around it to knights, and squires, and ghostly friars,—these are female virtues: but valour—why who ever heard——?"

"She is the all in all," said Brother Michael, "gentle as a ring-dove, yet high-soaring as a falcon: humble below her deserving, yet deserving beyond the estimate of panegyric: an exact economist in all superfluity, yet a most bountiful dispenser in all liberality: the chief regulator of her household, the fairest pillar of her hall, and the sweetest blossom of her bower: having, in all opposite proposings, sense to understand, judgment to weigh, discretion to choose, firmness to undertake, diligence to conduct, perseverance to accomplish, and resolution to maintain. For obedience to her husband, that is not to be tried till she has one: for faith in her confessor, she has as much as the law prescribes: for embroidery an Arachne: for music a Siren: and for pickling and preserving, did not one of her jars of sugared apricots give you your last surfeit at Arlingford Castle?"

"Call you that preserving?" said the little friar; "I call it destroying. Call you it pickling? Truly it pickled me. My life was saved by miracle."

"By canary," said Brother Michael. "Canary is the only life preserver, the true *aurum potabile*, the universal panacea for all diseases, thirst, and short life. Your life was saved by canary."

"Indeed, reverend father," said Sir Ralph, "if the young lady be half what you describe, she must be a paragon: but your commending her for valour does somewhat amaze me."

"She can fence," said the little friar, "and draw the long bow, and play at single-stick and quarter-staff."

"Yet mark you," said Brother Michael, "not like a virago or a hoyden, or one that would crack a serving-man's head for spilling gravy on her ruff, but with such womanly grace and temperate self-command as if those manly exercises belonged to her only, and were become for her sake feminine."

"You incite me," said Sir Ralph, "to view her more nearly. That madcap earl found me other employment than to remark her in the chapel."

"The earl is a worthy peer," said Brother Michael; "he is worth any fourteen earls on this side Trent, and any seven on the other." (The reader will please to remember that Rubygill Abbey was *north* of Trent.)

"His mettle will be tried," said Sir Ralph. "There is many a courtier will swear to King Henry to bring him in dead or alive."

"They must look to the brambles then," said Brother Michael.

"The bramble, the bramble, the bonny forest bramble,
Doth make a jest
Of silken vest,
That will through greenwood scramble:
The bramble, the bramble, the bonny forest bramble."

"Plague on your lungs, son Michael," said the abbot; "this is your old coil: always roaring in your cups."

"I know what I say," said Brother Michael; "there is often more sense in an old song than in a new homily.

"The courtly pad doth amble,
When his gay lord would ramble:
But both may catch
An awkward scratch,
If they ride among the bramble:
The bramble, the bramble, the bonny forest bramble."

"Tall friar," said Sir Ralph, "either you shoot the shafts of your merriment at random, or you know more of the earl's designs than beseems your frock."

"Let my frock," said Brother Michael, "answer for its own

scrupulous of employing what would have been extortion in the profane, to accomplish the pious purpose of bringing a blessing on the land by rescuing it from the frail hold of carnal and temporal into the firmer grasp of ghostly and spiritual possessors. But the earl, confident in the number and attachment of his retainers, stoutly refused either to repay the money, which he could not, or to yield the forfeiture, which he would not: a refusal which in those days was an act of outlawry in a gentleman, as it is now of bankruptcy in a base mechanic; the gentleman having in our wiser times a more liberal privilege of gentility, which enables him to keep his lands, and laugh at his creditor. Thus the mutual resentments and interests of the king and the abbot concurred to subject the earl to the penalties of outlawry, by which the abbot would gain his due upon the lands of Locksley, and the rest would be confiscate to the king. Still the king did not think it advisable to assail the earl in his own stronghold, but caused a diligent watch to be kept over his motions, till at length his rumoured marriage with the heiress of Arlingford seemed to point out an easy method of laying violent hands on the offender. Sir Ralph Montfaucon, a young man of good lineage and of an aspiring temper, who readily seized the first opportunity that offered of recommending himself to King Henry's favour by manifesting his zeal in his service, undertook the charge: and how he succeeded we have seen.

Sir Ralph's curiosity was strongly excited by the friar's description of the young lady of Arlingford, and he prepared in the morning to visit the castle, under the very plausible pretext of giving the baron an explanation of his intervention at the nuptials. Brother Michael and the little fat friar proposed to be his guides. The proposal was courteously accepted, and they set out together, leaving Sir Ralph's followers at the abbey. The knight was mounted on a spirited charger; Brother Michael on a large, heavy-trotting horse; and the little fat friar on a plump, soft-paced galloway, so correspondent with himself in size, rotundity, and sleekness, that if they had been amalgamated into a centaur, there would have been nothing to alter in their proportions.

"Do you know," said the little friar, as they wound along the banks of the stream, "the reason why lake-trout is better than river-trout and shyer withal?"

"I was not aware of the fact," said Sir Ralph.

"A most heterodox remark," said Brother Michael; "know you not, that in all nice matters you should take the implication for absolute, and, without looking into the *fact whether*, seek only the *reason why?* But the fact is so, on the word of a friar; which what layman will venture to gainsay who prefers a down bed to a gridiron?"

"The fact being so," said the knight, "I am still at a loss for the reason; nor would I undertake to opine in a matter of that magnitude: since, in all that appertains to the good things either of this world or the next, my reverend spiritual guides are kind enough to take the trouble of thinking off my hands."

"Spoken," said Brother Michael, "with a sound Catholic conscience. My little brother here is most profound in the matter of trout. He has marked, learned, and inwardly digested the subject, twice a week at least for five-and-thirty years. I yield to him in this. My strong points are venison and canary."

"The good qualities of a trout," said the little friar, "are firmness and redness, redness, indeed, being the visible sign of all other virtues."

"Whence," said Brother Michael, "we choose our abbot by his nose:

> "The rose on the nose does all virtues disclose:
> For the outward grace shows
> That the inward o'erflows
> When it glows in the rose of a red, red nose."

"Now," said the little friar, "as is the firmness, so is the redness, and as is the redness, so is the shyness."

"Marry why?" said Brother Michael. "The solution is not physical-natural, but physical-historical, or natural superinductive. And thereby hangs a tale, which may be either said or sung:

> "The damsel stood to watch the fight
> By the banks of Kingslea Mere,
> And they brought to her feet her own true knight
> Sore wounded on a bier.
>
> "She knelt by him his wounds to bind,
> She washed them with many a tear;
> And shouts rose fast upon the wind,
> Which told that the foe was near.

" ' Oh ! let not,' he said, 'while yet I live,
The cruel foe me take :
But with thy sweet lips a last kiss give,
And cast me in the lake.'

" Around his neck she wound her arms,
And she kissed his lips so pale :
And evermore the war's alarms
Came louder up the vale.

" She drew him to the lake's steep side,
Where the red heath fringed the shore ;
She plunged with him beneath the tide,
And they were seen no more.

" Their true blood mingled in Kingslea Mere,
That to mingle on earth was fain :
And the trout that swims in the crystal clear
Is tinged with the crimson stain.

" Thus, you see how good comes of evil, and how a holy friar may fare better on fast-day for the violent death of two lovers two hundred years ago. The inference is most consecutive, that wherever you catch a red-fleshed trout, love lies bleeding under the water : an occult quality, which can only act in the stationary waters of a lake, being neutralized by the rapid transition of those of a stream."

" And why is the trout shyer for that ?" asked Sir Ralph.

" Do you not see ?" said Brother Michael. " The virtues of both lovers diffuse themselves through the lake. The infusion of masculine valour makes the fish active and sanguineous : the infusion of maiden modesty makes him coy and hard to win : and you shall find through life, the fish which is most easily hooked is not the best worth dishing. But yonder are the towers of Arlingford."

The little friar stopped. He seemed suddenly struck with an awful thought, which caused a momentary palescence in his rosy complexion ; and after a brief hesitation, he turned his galloway, and told his companions he should bid them good-day.

" Why, what is in the wind now, Brother Peter ?" said Friar Michael.

" The Lady Matilda," said the little friar, " can draw the long-bow. She must bear no goodwill to Sir Ralph ; and if she should espy him from her tower, she may testify her recognition with cloth-yard shaft. She is not so infallible a markswoman, but that she might shoot at a crow, and kill a

pigeon. She might peradventure miss the knight, and hit me, who never did her any harm."

"Tut, tut, man," said Brother Michael, "there is no such fear."

"Mass," said the little friar, "but there is such a fear, and very strong too. You who have it not may keep your way, and I who have it shall take mine. I am not just now in the vein for being picked off at a long shot." And saying these words, he spurred up his four-footed better-half, and galloped off as nimbly as if he heard an arrow singing behind him.

"Is this Lady Matilda, then, so very terrible a damsel?" said Sir Ralph to Brother Michael.

"By no means," said the friar. "She has certainly a high spirit; but it is the wing of the eagle, without his beak or his claw. She is as gentle as magnanimous; but it is the gentleness of the summer wind, which, however lightly it wave the tuft of the pine, carries with it the intimation of a power, that, if roused to its extremity, could make it bend to the dust."

"From the warmth of your panegyric, ghostly father," said the knight, "I should almost suspect you were in love with the damsel."

"So I am," said the friar, "and I care not who knows it; but all in the way of honesty, master soldier. I am, as it were, her spiritual lover; and were she a damsel errant, I would be her ghostly esquire, her friar militant. I would buckle me in armour of proof, and the devil might thresh me black with an iron flail before I would knock under in her cause. Though they be not yet one canonically, thanks to your soldiership, the earl is her liege lord, and she is his liege lady. I am her father confessor and ghostly director: I have taken on me to show her the way to the next world; and how can I do that if I lose sight of her in this? seeing that this is but the road to the other, and has so many circumvolutions and ramifications of by-ways and beaten paths (all more thickly set than the true one with finger-posts and milestones, not one of which tells truth), that a traveller has need of some one who knows the way, or the odds go hard against him that he will ever see the face of Saint Peter.

"But there must surely be some reason," said Sir Ralph, "for Father Peter's apprehension."

"None," said Brother Michael, "but the apprehension itself; fear being its own father, and most prolific in self-propagation. The lady did, it is true, once signalize her displeasure against our little brother, for reprimanding her in that she would go hunting a-mornings instead of attending matins. She cut short the thread of his eloquence by sportively drawing her bow-string, and loosing an arrow over his head; he waddled off with singular speed, and was in much awe of her for many months. I thought he had forgotten it: but let that pass. In truth, she would have had little of her lover's company, if she had liked the chaunt of the choristers better than the cry of the hounds: yet I know not; for they were companions from the cradle, and reciprocally fashioned each other to the love of the fern and the foxglove. Had either been less sylvan, the other might have been more saintly: but they will now never hear matins but those of the lark, nor reverence vaulted aisle but that of the greenwood canopy. They are twin plants of the forest and are identified with its growth.

"For the tender beech and the sapling oak,
That grow by the shadowy rill,
You may cut down both at a single stroke,
You may cut down which you will.

"But this you must know, that as long as they grow,
Whatever change may be,
You never can teach either oak or beech
To be aught but a greenwood tree."

CHAPTER III.

Inflamed wrath in glowing breast.—BUTLER.

THE knight and the friar arrived at Arlingford Castle, and leaving their horses in the care of Lady Matilda's groom, with whom the friar was in great favour, were ushered into a stately apartment, where they found the baron alone, flourishing an enormous carving-knive over a brother baron—of beef—with as much vehemence of action as if he were cutting down an enemy. The baron was a gentleman of a fierce and choleric temperament: he was lineally descended from the redoubtable Fircabras of Normandy, who

came over to England with the Conqueror, and who, in the battle of Hastings, killed with his own hand four-and-twenty Saxon cavaliers all on a row. The very excess of the baron's internal rage on the preceding day had smothered its external manifestation: he was so equally angry with both parties, that he knew not on which to vent his wrath. He was enraged with the earl for having brought himself into such a dilemma without his privity; and he was no less enraged with the king's men for their very unseasonable intrusion. He could willingly have fallen on both parties, but he must necessarily have begun with one; and he felt that on whichever side he should strike the first blow, his retainers would immediately join battle. He had therefore contented himself with forcing away his daughter from the scene of action. In the course of the evening he had received intelligence that the earl's castle was in possession of a party of the king's men, who had been detached by Sir Ralph Montfaucon to seize on it during the earl's absence. The baron inferred from this that the earl's case was desperate; and those who have had the opportunity of seeing a rich friend fall suddenly into poverty, may easily judge by their own feelings how quickly and completely the whole moral being of the earl was changed in the baron's estimation. The baron immediately proceeded to require in his daughter's mind the same summary revolution that had taken place in his own, and considered himself exceedingly ill-used by her non-compliance. The lady had retired to her chamber, and the baron had passed a supperless and sleepless night, stalking about his apartments till an advanced hour of the morning, when hunger compelled him to summon into his presence the spoils of the buttery, which, being the intended array of an uneaten wedding feast, were more than usually abundant, and on which, when the knight and the friar entered, he was falling with desperate valour. He looked up at them fiercely, with his mouth full of beef and his eyes full of flame, and rising, as ceremony required, made an awful bow to the knight, inclining himself forward over the table, and presenting his carving-knife *en militaire*, in a manner that seemed to leave it doubtful whether he meant to show respect to his visitor, or to defend his provision: but the doubt was soon cleared up by his politely motioning the knight to be seated; on which the friar advanced to the table, saying, "For what we are going to

picking a quarrel with monarchy? that flings away his own lands into the clutches of rascally friars, for the sake of hunting in other men's grounds, and feasting vagabonds that wear Lincoln green, and would have flung away mine into the bargain if he had had my daughter? What do you mean by great wrong?'

"True," said the friar: "great right, I meant."

"Right!" exclaimed the baron: "what right has any man to do my daughter right but myself? What right has any man to drive my daughter's bridegroom out of the chapel in the middle of the marriage ceremony, and turn all our merry faces into green wounds and bloody cockscombs, and then come and tell me he has done us great right?"

"True," said the friar: "he has done neither right nor wrong."

"But he has," said the baron, "he has done both, and I will maintain it with my glove."

"It shall not need," said Sir Ralph; "I will concede anything in honour."

"And I," said the baron, "will concede nothing in honour: I will concede nothing in honour to any man."

"Neither will I, Lord Fitzwater," said Sir Ralph, "in that sense: but hear me. I was commissioned by the king to apprehend the Earl of Huntingdon. I brought with me a party of soldiers, picked and tried men, knowing that he would not lightly yield. I sent my lieutenant with a detachment to surprise the earl's castle in his absence, and laid my measures for intercepting him on the way to his intended nuptials; but he seems to have had intimation of this part of my plan, for he brought with him a large armed retinue, and took a circuitous route, which made him, I believe, somewhat later than his appointed hour. When the lapse of time showed me that he had taken another track, I pursued him to the chapel; and I would have awaited the close of the ceremony, if I had thought that either yourself or your daughter would have felt desirous that she should have been the bride of an outlaw."

"Who said, sir," cried the baron, "that we were desirous of any such thing? But truly, sir, if I had a mind to the devil for a son-in-law, I would fain see the man that should venture to interfere."

"That would I," said the friar; "for I have undertaken to make her renounce the devil."

"She shall not renounce the devil," said the baron, "unless I please. You are very ready with your undertakings. Will you undertake to make her renounce the earl, who, I believe, is the devil incarnate? Will you undertake that?"

"Will I undertake," said the friar, "to make Trent run westward, or to make flame burn downward, or to make a tree grow with its head in the earth, and its root in the air?"

"So then," said the baron, "a girl's mind is as hard to change as nature and the elements, and it is easier to make her renounce the devil than a lover. Are you a match for the devil, and no match for a man?"

"My warfare," said the friar, "is not of this world. I am a militant, not against man, but the devil, who goes about seeking what he may devour."

"Oh! does he so?" said the baron: "then I take it that makes you look for him so often in my buttery. Will you cast out the devil whose name is Legion, when you cannot cast out the imp whose name is Love?"

"Marriages," said the friar, "are made in heaven. Love is God's work, and therewith I meddle not."

"God's work, indeed!" said the baron, "when the ceremony was cut short in the church. Could men have put them asunder if God had joined them together? And the earl is now no earl, but plain Robert Fitz-Ooth: therefore, I'll none of him."

"He may atone," said the friar, "and the king may mollify. The earl is a worthy peer, and the king is a courteous king."

"He cannot atone," said Sir Ralph. "He has killed the king's men; and if the baron should aid and abet, he will lose his castle and land."

"Will I?" said the baron. "Not while I have a drop of blood in my veins. He that comes to take them shall first serve me as the friar serves my flasks of canary: he shall drain me dry as hay. Am I not disparaged? Am I not outraged? Is not my daughter vilified and made a mockery? A girl half-married? There was my butler brought home with a broken head. My butler, friar: there is that may move your sympathy. Friar, the earl-no-earl shall come no more to my daughter."

"Very good," said the friar.

"It is not very good," said the baron, "for I cannot get her to say so."

"I fear," said Sir Ralph, "the young lady must be much distressed and discomposed."

"Not a whit, sir," said the baron. "She is, as usual, in a most provoking imperturbability, and contradicts me so smilingly that it would enrage you to see her."

"I had hoped," said Sir Ralph, "that I might have seen her, to make my excuse in person for the hard necessity of my duty."

He had scarcely spoken, when the door opened, and the lady made her appearance.

CHAPTER IV.

Are you mad, or what are you, that you squeak out your catches without mitigation or remorse of voice?—*Twelfth Night.*

MATILDA, not dreaming of visitors, tripped into the apartment, in a dress of forest green, with a small quiver by her side, and a bow and arrow in her hand. Her hair, black and glossy as the raven's wing, curled like wandering clusters of dark ripe grapes under the edge of her round bonnet; and a plume of black feathers fell back negligently above it, with an almost horizontal inclination, that seemed the habitual effect of rapid motion against the wind. Her black eyes sparkled like sunbeams on a river: a clear, deep, liquid radiance, the reflection of ethereal fire,—tempered, not subdued, in the medium of its living and gentle mirror. Her lips were half-opened to speak as she entered the apartment; and with a smile of recognition to the friar, and a courtesy to the stranger knight, she approached the baron, and said, "You are late at your breakfast, father."

"I am not at breakfast," said the baron. "I have been at supper: my last night's supper; for I had none."

"I am sorry," said Matilda, "you should have gone to bed supperless."

"I did not go to bed supperless," said the baron: "I did not go to bed at all: and what are you doing with that green dress and that bow and arrow?"

"I am going a-hunting," said Matilda.

"A-hunting?" said the baron. "What, I warrant you, to meet with the earl, and slip your neck into the same noose?"

"No," said Matilda, "I am not going out of our own woods to-day."

"How do I know that?" said the baron. "What surety have I of that?"

"Here is the friar," said Matilda. "He will be surety."

"Not he," said the baron: "he will undertake nothing but where the devil is a party concerned."

"Yes, I will," said the friar: "I will undertake anything for the Lady Matilda."

"No matter for that," said the baron: "she shall not go hunting to-day."

"Why, father," said Matilda, "if you coop me up here in this odious castle, I shall pine and die like a lonely swan on a pool."

"No," said the baron, "the lonely swan does not die on the pool. If there be a river at hand, she flies to the river, and finds her a mate; and so shall not you."

"But," said Matilda, "you may send with me any, or as many, of your grooms as you will."

"My grooms," said the baron, "are all false knaves. There is not a rascal among them but loves you better than me. Villains that I feed and clothe."

"Surely," said Matilda, "it is not villany to love me: if it be, I should be sorry my father were an honest man." The baron relaxed his muscles into a smile. "Or my lover either," added Matilda. The baron looked grim again.

"For your lover," said the baron, "you may give God thanks of him. He is as arrant a knave as ever poached."

"What, for hunting the king's deer?" said Matilda. "Have I not heard you rail at the forest laws by the hour?"

"Did you ever hear me," said the baron, "rail myself out of house and land? If I had done that, then were I a knave."

"My lover," said Matilda, "is a brave man, and a true man, and a generous man, and a young man, and a handsome man; ay, and an honest man too."

"How can he be an honest man," said the baron, "when

he has neither house nor land, which are the better part of a man?"

"They are but the husk of a man," said Matilda, "the worthless coat of the chestnut; the man himself is the kernel."

"The man is the grape stone," said the baron, "and the pulp of the melon. The house and land are the true substantial fruit, and all that give him savour and value."

"He will never want house or land," said Matilda, "while the meeting boughs weave a green roof in the wood, and the free range of the hart marks out the bounds of the forest."

"Vert and venison! vert and venison!" exclaimed the baron. "Treason and flat rebellion. Confound your smiling face! what makes you look so good-humoured? What! you think I can't look at you, and be in a passion? You think so, do you? We shall see. Have you no fear in talking thus, when here is the king's liegeman come to take us all into custody, and confiscate our goods and chattels?"

"Nay, Lord Fitzwater," said Sir Ralph, "you wrong me in your report. My visit is one of courtesy and excuse, not of menace and authority."

"There it is," said the baron: "every one takes a pleasure in contradicting me. Here is this courteous knight, who has not opened his mouth three times since he has been in my house except to take in provision, cuts me short in my story with a flat denial."

"Oh! I cry you mercy, sir knight," said Matilda; "I did not mark you before. I am your debtor for no slight favour, and so is my liege lord."

"Her liege lord!" exclaimed the baron, taking large strides across the chamber.

"Pardon me, gentle lady," said Sir Ralph. "Had I known you before yesterday, I would have cut off my right hand ere it should have been raised to do you displeasure."

"Oh, sir," said Matilda, "a good man may be forced on an ill office: but I can distinguish the man from his duty." She presented to him her hand, which he kissed respectfully, and simultaneously with the contact thirty-two invisible arrows plunged at once into his heart, one from every point he compass of his pericardia.

Well, father," added Matilda, "I must go to the woods."

"Must you?" said the baron; "I say you must not."

"But I am going," said Matilda.

"But I will have up the drawbridge," said the baron.

"But I will swim the moat," said Matilda.

"But I will secure the gates," said the baron.

"But I will leap from the battlement," said Matilda.

"But I will lock you in an upper chamber," said the baron.

"But I will shred the tapestry," said Matilda, "and let myself down."

"But I will lock you in a turret," said the baron, "where you shall only see light through a loophole."

"But through that loophole," said Matilda, "will I take my flight, like a young eagle from its eyrie; and, father, while I go out freely, I will return willingly: but if once I slip out through a loop-hole——" She paused a moment, and then added, singing,—

"The love that follows fain
Will never its faith betray:
But the faith that is held in a chain
Will never be found again,
If a single link give way."

The melody acted irresistibly on the harmonious propensities of the friar, who accordingly sang in his turn,—

"For hark! hark! hark!
The dog doth bark,
That watches the wild deer's lair.
The hunter awakes at the peep of the dawn,
But the lair it is empty, the deer it is gone,
And the hunter knows not where."

Matilda and the friar then sang together,—

"Then follow, oh follow! the hounds do cry:
The red sun flames in the eastern sky;
The stag bounds over the hollow.
He that lingers in spirit, or loiters in hall,
Shall see us no more till the evening fall,
And no voice but the echo shall answer his call:
Then follow, oh follow, follow;
Follow, oh follow, follow!"

During the process of this harmony, the baron's eyes

wandered from his daughter to the friar, and from the friar to his daughter again, with an alternate expression of anger differently modified: when he looked on the friar, it was anger without qualification; when he looked on his daughter it was still anger, but tempered by an expression of involuntary admiration and pleasure. These rapid fluctuations of the baron's physiognomy—the habitual, reckless, resolute merriment in the jovial face of the friar,—and the cheerful, elastic spirits that played on the lips and sparkled in the eyes of Matilda,—would have presented a very amusing combination to Sir Ralph, if one of the three images in the group had not absorbed his total attention with feelings of intense delight very nearly allied to pain. The baron's wrath was somewhat counteracted by the reflection that his daughter's good spirits seemed to show that they would naturally rise triumphant over all disappointments; and he had had sufficient experience of her humour to know that she might sometimes be led, but never could be driven. Then, too, he was always delighted to hear her sing, though he was not at all pleased in this instance with the subject of her song. Still he would have endured the subject for the sake of the melody of the treble, but his mind was not sufficiently attuned to unison to relish the harmony of the bass. The friar's accompaniment put him out of all patience, and—"So," he exclaimed, "this is the way you teach my daughter to renounce the devil, is it? A hunting friar, truly! Who ever heard before of a hunting friar? A profane, roaring, bawling, bumper-bibbing, neck-breaking, catch-singing friar?"

"Under favour, bold baron," said the friar; but the friar was warm with canary, and in his singing vein; and he could not go on in plain unmusical prose. He therefore sang in a new tune,—

"Though I be now a gray, gray friar,
Yet I was once a hale young knight:
The cry of my dogs was the only choir
In which my spirit did take delight.

"Little I recked of matin bell,
But drowned its toil with my clanging horn:
And the only beads I loved to tell
Were the beads of dew on the spangled thorn."

The baron was going to storm, but the friar paused, and Matilda sang in repetition,—

"Little I reck of matin bell,
But drown its toll with my clanging horn:
And the only beads I love to tell
Are the beads of dew on the spangled thorn."

And then she and the friar sang the four lines together, and rang the changes upon them alternately.

"Little I reck of matin bell,"

sang the friar.

"A precious friar," said the baron.

"But drown its toll with my clanging horn,"

sang Matilda.

"More shame for you," said the baron.

"And the only beads I love to tell
Are the beads of dew on the spangled thorn,"

sang Matilda and the friar together.

"Penitent and confessor," said the baron: "a hopeful pair truly."

The friar went on,—

"An archer keen I was withal,
As ever did lean on greenwood tree;
And could make the fleetest roebuck fall,
A good three hundred yards from me.
Though changeful time, with hand severe,
Has made me now these joys forego,
Yet my heart bounds whene'er I hear
Yoicks! hark away! and tally ho!"

Matilda chimed in as before.

"Are you mad?" said the baron. "Are you insane? Are you possessed? What do you mean? What in the devil's name do you both mean?"

"Yoicks! hark away! and tally ho!"

roared the friar.

The baron's pent-up wrath had accumulated like the waters above the dam of an overshot mill. The pond-head of his passion being now filled to the utmost limit of its capacity,

and beginning to overflow in the quivering of his lips and the flashing of his eyes, he pulled up all the flash-boards at once, and gave loose to the full torrent of his indignation, by seizing, like furious Ajax, not a massy stone more than two modern men could raise, but a vast dish of beef more than fifty ancient yeomen could eat, and whirled it like a quoit, *in terrorem*, over the head of the friar, to the extremity of the apartment,

> Where it on oaken floor did settle,
> With mighty din of ponderous metal.

"Nay, father," said Matilda, taking the baron's hand, "do not harm the friar: he means not to offend you. My gaiety never before displeased you. Least of all should it do so now, when I have need of all my spirits to outweigh the severity of my fortune."

As she spoke the last words, tears started into her eyes, which, as if ashamed of the involuntary betraying of her feelings, she turned away to conceal. The baron was subdued at once. He kissed his daughter, held out his hand to the friar, and said, "Sing on, in God's name, and crack away the flasks till your voice swims in canary." Then turning to Sir Ralph, he said, "You see how it is, sir knight. Matilda is my daughter; but she has me in leading-strings, that is the truth of it."

CHAPTER V.

> 'Tis true, no lover has that power
> To enforce a desperate amour,
> As he that has two strings to his bow,
> And burns for love and money too.—BUTLER.

THE friar had often had experience of the baron's testy humour; but it had always before confined itself to words, in which the habit of testiness often mingled more expression of displeasure than the internal feeling prompted. He knew the baron to be hot and choleric, but at the same time hospitable and generous; passionately fond of his daughter, often thwarting her in seeming, but always

yielding to her in fact. The early attachment between Matilda and the Earl of Huntingdon had given the baron no serious reason to interfere with her habits and pursuits, which were so congenial to those of her lover; and not being overburdened with orthodoxy, that is to say, not being seasoned with more of the salt of the spirit than was necessary to preserve him from excommunication, confiscation, and philotheoparoptesism,* he was not sorry to encourage his daughter's choice of her confessor in Brother Michael, who had more jollity and less hypocrisy than any of his fraternity, and was very little anxious to disguise his love of the good things of this world under the semblance of a sanctified exterior. The friar and Matilda had often sung duets together, and had been accustomed to the baron's chiming in with a stormy *capriccio*, which was usually charmed into silence by some sudden turn in the witching melodies of Matilda. They had therefore naturally calculated, as far as their wild spirits calculated at all, on the same effects from the same causes. But the circumstances of the preceding day had made an essential alteration in the case. The baron knew well, from the intelligence he had received, that the earl's offence was past remission: which would have been of less moment but for the awful fact of his castle being in the possession of the king's forces, and in those days possession was considerably more than eleven points of the law. The baron was therefore convinced that the earl's outlawry was infallible, and that Matilda must either renounce her lover, or become with him an outlaw and a fugitive. In proportion, therefore, to the baron's knowledge of the strength and duration of her attachment, was his fear of the difficulty of its ever being overcome: her love of the forest and the chase, which he had never before discouraged, now presented itself to him as matter of serious alarm; and if her cheerfulness gave him hope on the one hand by indicating a spirit superior to all disappointments, it was suspicious to him on the other, as arising from some latent certainty of being soon united to the earl. All these circumstances concurred to render their songs of the vanished deer and green-wood archery and Yoicks and Harkaway, extremely *mal à propos*, and to make his anger boil and bubble in the cauldron of his spirit, till its more than ordinary excitement burst forth with sudden impulse into active manifestation.

* Roasting by a slow fire for the love of God.

But as it sometimes happens, from the might
Of *rage* in minds that can no farther go,
As high as they have mounted in *despite*
In their *remission* do they sink as low,
To *our bold baron* did it happen so.*

For his diabolic exploit proved the climax of his rage, and was succeeded by an immediate sense that he had passed the bounds of legitimate passion; and he sunk immediately from the very pinnacle of opposition to the level of implicit acquiescence. The friar's spirits were not to be marred by such a little incident. He was half-inclined, at first, to return the baron's compliment; but his love of Matilda checked him; and when the baron held out his hand, the friar seized it cordially, and they drowned all recollection of the affair by pledging each other in a cup of canary.

The friar, having stayed long enough to see everything replaced on a friendly footing, rose, and moved to take his leave. Matilda told him he must come again on the morrow, for she had a very long confession to make to him. This the friar promised to do, and departed with the knight.

Sir Ralph, on reaching the abbey, drew his followers together, and led them to Locksley Castle, which he found in the possession of his lieutenant, whom he again left there with a sufficient force to hold it in safe keeping in the king's name, and proceeded to London to report the results of his enterprise.

Now Henry our royal king was very wroth at the earl's evasion, and swore by Saint Thomas-à-Becket (whom he had himself translated into a saint by having him knocked on the head), that he would give the castle and lands of Locksley to the man who should bring in the earl. Hereupon ensued a process of thought in the mind of the knight. The eyes of the fair huntress of Arlingford had left a wound in his heart which only she who gave could heal. He had seen that the baron was no longer very partial to the outlawed earl, but that he still retained his old affection for the lands and castle of Locksley. Now the lands and castle were very fair things in themselves, and would be pretty appurtenances to an adventurous knight; but they would be doubly valu-

* Of these lines all that is not in italics belongs to Mr. Wordsworth: *Resolution and Independence.*

able as certain passports to the father's favour, which was one step towards that of the daughter, or at least towards obtaining possession of her either quietly or perforce; for the knight was not so nice in his love as to consider the lady's free grace a *sine quâ non:* and to think of being, by any means whatever, the lord of Locksley and Arlingford, and the husband of the bewitching Matilda, was to cut in the shades of futurity a vista very tempting to a soldier of fortune. He set out in high spirits with a chosen band of followers, and beat up all the country far and wide around both the Ouse and the Trent; but fortune did not seem disposed to second his diligence, for no vestige whatever could he trace of the earl. His followers, who were only paid with the wages of hope, began to murmur and fall off; for, as those unenlightened days were ignorant of the happy invention of paper machinery, by which one promise to pay is satisfactorily paid with another promise to pay, and that again with another in infinite series, they would not, as their wiser posterity has done, take those tenders for true pay which were not sterling; so that, one fine morning, the knight found himself sitting on a pleasant bank of the Trent, with only a solitary squire, who still clung to the shadow of preferment, because he did not see at the moment any better chance of the substance.

The knight did not despair because of the desertion of his followers: he was well aware that he could easily raise recruits if he could once find trace of his game: he, therefore, rode about indefatigably over hill and dale, to the great sharpening of his own appetite and that of his squire, living gallantly from inn to inn when his purse was full, and quartering himself in the king's name on the nearest ghostly brotherhood when it happened to be empty. An autumn and a winter had passed away, when the course of his perlustrations brought him one day to a beautiful sylvan valley, where he found a number of young women weaving garlands of flowers, and singing over their pleasant occupation. He approached them, and courteously inquired the way to the nearest town.

"There is no town within several miles," was the answer.

"A village, then, if it be but large enough to furnish an inn?"

"There is Gamwell just by, but there is no inn nearer than the nearest town."

"An abbey, then?"

"There is no abbey nearer than the nearest inn."

"A house, then, or a cottage, where I may obtain hospitality for the night?"

"Hospitality!" said one of the young women; "you have not far to seek for that. Do you not know that you are in the neighbourhood of Gamwell Hall.

"So far from it," said the knight, "that I never heard the name of Gamwell-Hall before."

"Never heard of Gamwell Hall!" exclaimed all the young women together, who could as soon have dreamed of his never having heard of the sky.

"Indeed, no!" said Sir Ralph; "but I shall be very happy to get rid of my ignorance."

"And so shall I," said his squire; "for it seems that in this case knowledge will for once be a cure for hunger, wherewith I am grievously afflicted."

"And why are you so busy, my pretty damsels, weaving these garlands?" said the knight.

"Why, do you not know, sir," said one of the young women, "that to-morrow is Gamwell feast?"

The knight was again obliged, with all humility, to confess his ignorance.

"Oh! sir," said his informant, "then you will have something to see, that I can tell you; for we shall choose a Queen of the May, and we shall crown her with flowers, and place her in a chariot of flowers, and draw it with lines of flowers, and we shall hang all the trees with flowers, and we shall strew all the ground with flowers, and we shall dance with flowers, and in flowers, and on flowers, and we shall be all flowers."

"That you will," said the knight; "and the sweetest and brightest of all the flowers of the May, my pretty damsels." On which all the pretty damsels smiled at him and each other.

"And there will be all sorts of May-games, and there will be prizes for archery, and there will be the knight's ale, and the foresters' venison, and there will be Kit Scrapesqueak with his fiddle, and little Tom Whistlerap with his fife and tabor, and Sam Trumtwang with his harp, and Peter Muggle-

drone with his bagpipe, and how I shall dance with Will Whitethorn!" added the girl, clapping her hands as she spoke, and bounding from the ground with the pleasure of the anticipation.

A tall, athletic young man approached, to whom the rustic maidens courtesied with great respect; and one of them informed Sir Ralph that it was young Master William Gamwell. The young gentleman invited and conducted the knight to the hall, where he introduced him to the old knight, his father, and to the old lady, his mother, and to the young lady, his sister, and to a number of bold yeomen, who were laying siege to beef, brawn, and plum pie, around a ponderous table, and taking copious draughts of old October. A motto was inscribed over the interior door—

EAT, DRINK, AND BE MERRY:

an injunction which Sir Ralph and his squire showed remarkable alacrity in obeying. Old Sir Guy of Gamwell gave Sir Ralph a very cordial welcome, and entertained him during supper with several of his best stories, enforced with an occasional slap on the back, and pointed with a peg in the ribs; a species of vivacious eloquence in which the old gentleman excelled, and which is supposed by many of that pleasant variety of the human species, known by the name of choice fellows, and comical dogs, to be the genuine tangible shape of the cream of a good joke.

CHAPTER VI.

What! shall we have incision? shall we embrew?
Henry IV.

OLD Sir Guy of Gamwell, and young William Gamwell, and fair Alice Gamwell, and Sir Ralph Montfaucon and his squire, rode together the next morning to the scene of the feast. They arrived on a village-green, surrounded with cottages peeping from among the trees by which the green was completely encircled. The whole circle was hung round with one continuous garland of flowers, de-

pending in irregular festoons from the branches. In the centre of the green was a May-pole hidden in boughs and garlands; and a multitude of round-faced bumpkins and cherry-cheeked lasses were dancing around it, to the quadruple melody of Scrapesqueak, Whistlerap, Trumtwang, and Muggledrone: harmony we must not call it; for, though they had agreed to a partnership in point of time, each, like a true painstaking man, seemed determined to have his time to himself: Muggledrone played *allegretto*, Trumtwang *allegro*, Whistlerap *presto*, and Scrapesqueak *prestissimo*. There was a kind of mathematical proportion in their discrepancy: while Muggledrone played the tune four times, Trumtwang played it five, Whistlerap six, and Scrapesqueak eight; for the latter completely distanced all his competitors, and indeed worked his elbow so nimbly that its outline was scarcely distinguishable through the mistiness of its rapid vibration.

While the knight was delighting his eyes and ears with these pleasant sights and sounds, all eyes were turned in one direction; and Sir Ralph, looking round, saw a fair lady in green and gold come riding through the trees, accompanied by a portly friar in gray, and several fair damsels and gallant grooms. On their nearer approach, he recognized the Lady Matilda and her ghostly adviser, Brother Michael. A party of foresters arrived from another direction, and then ensued cordial interchanges of greeting, and collisions of hands and lips, among the Gamwells and the new-comers—"How does my fair coz, Mawd?" and "How does my sweet coz, Mawd?" and "How does my wild coz, Mawd?" And "Eh! jolly friar, your hand, old boy:" and "Here, honest friar:" and "To me, merry friar:" and "By your favour, Mistress Alice:" and "Hey! Cousin Robin:" and "Hey! Cousin Will:" and "Od's life! merry Sir Guy, you grow younger every year,"—as the old knight shook them all in turn with one hand, and slapped them on the back with the other, in token of his affection. A number of young men and women advanced, some drawing, and others dancing round, a floral car; and having placed a crown of flowers on Matilda's head, and saluted her Queen of the May, they drew her to the place appointed for the rural sports.

A hogshead of ale was abroach under an oak, and a fire was blazing in an open space before the trees to roast the fat

deer which the foresters brought. The sports commenced; and, after an agreeable series of bowling, quoiting, pitching, hurling, racing, leaping, grinning, wrestling or friendly dislocation of joints, and cudgel-playing or amicable cracking of skulls, the trial of archery ensued. The conqueror was to be be rewarded with a golden arrow from the hand of the Queen of the May, who was to be his partner in the dance till the close of the feast. This stimulated the knight's emulation: young Gamwell supplied him with a bow and arrow, and he took his station among the foresters, but had the mortification to be outshot by them all, and to see one of them lodge the point of his arrow in the golden ring of the centre, and receive the prize from the hand of the beautiful Matilda, who smiled on him with particular grace. The jealous knight scrutinized the successful champion with great attention, and surely thought he had seen that face before. In the meantime the forester led the lady to the station. The luckless Sir Ralph drank deep draughts of love from the matchless grace of her attitudes, as, taking the bow in her left hand, and adjusting the arrow with her right, advancing her left foot, and gently curving her beautiful figure with a slight motion of her head that waved her black feathers and her ringleted hair, she drew the arrow to its head, and loosed it from her open fingers. The arrow struck within the ring of gold, so close to that of the victorious forester that the points were in contact, and the feathers were intermingled. Great acclamations succeeded, and the forester led Matilda to the dance. Sir Ralph gazed on her fascinating motions till the torments of baffled love and jealous rage became unendurable; and approaching young Gamwell, he asked him if he knew the name of that forester who was leading the dance with the Queen of the May?

"Robin, I believe," said young Gamwell carelessly: "I think they call him Robin."

"Is that all you know of him?" said Sir Ralph.

"What more should I know of him?" said young Gamwell.

"Then I can tell you," said Sir Ralph, "he is the outlawed Earl of Huntingdon, on whose head is set so large a price."

"Ay, is he?" said young Gamwell, in the same careless manner.

"He is a prize worth the taking," said Sir Ralph.

"No doubt," said young Gamwell.

"How think you?" said Sir Ralph: "are the foresters his adherents?"

"I cannot say," said young Gamwell.

"Is your peasantry loyal and well-disposed?" said Sir Ralph.

"Passing loyal," said young Gamwell.

"If I should call on them in the king's name," said Sir Ralph, "think you they would aid and assist?"

"Most likely they would," said young Gamwell, "one side or the other."

"Ay, but which side?" said the knight.

"That remains to be tried," said young Gamwell.

"I have King Henry's commission," said the knight, "to apprehend this earl that was. How would you advise me to act, being, as you see, without attendant force?"

"I would advise you," said young Gamwell, "to take yourself off without delay, unless you would relish the taste of a volley of arrows, a shower of stones, and a hailstorm of cudgel-blows, which would not be turned aside by a God save King Henry."

Sir Ralph's squire no sooner heard this, and saw by the looks of the speaker that he was not likely to prove a false prophet, than he clapped spurs to his horse and galloped off with might and main. This gave the knight a good excuse to pursue him, which he did with great celerity, calling, "Stop, you rascal." When the squire fancied himself safe out of the reach of pursuit, he checked his speed, and allowed the knight to come up with him. They rode on several miles in silence, till they discovered the towers and spires of Nottingham, where the knight introduced himself to the sheriff, and demanded an armed force to assist in the apprehension of the outlawed Earl of Huntingdon. The sheriff, who was willing to have his share of the prize, determined to accompany the knight in person, and regaled him and his man with good store of the best; after which they, with a stout retinue of fifty men, took the way to Gamwell feast.

"God's my life," said the sheriff, as they rode along, "I had as lief you would tell me of a service of plate. I much doubt if this outlawed earl, this forester Robin, be not the man they call Robin Hood, who has quartered himself in

Forest, and whom, in endeavouring to apprehend,
en divers times into disasters. He has gotten to-
and of disinherited prodigals, outlawed debtors,
icated heretics, elder sons that have spent all they
younger sons that never had anything to spend;
hese he kills the king's deer, and plunders wealthy
f five-sixths of their money; but if they be abbots
them he despoils utterly."

riff then proceeded to relate to his companion the
of the Abbot of Doubleflask (which some grave
have related of the Abbot of Saint Mary's, and
he Bishop of Hereford): how the abbot, returning
y in company with his high selerer, who carried
manteau the rents of the abbey-lands, and with a
train of attendants, came upon four seeming pea-
were roasting the king's venison by the king's
how, in just indignation at this flagrant infringe-
e forest laws, he asked them what they meant, and
red that they meant to dine: how he ordered them
l and bound, and led captive to Nottingham, that
know wild-flesh to have been destined by Provi-
licensed and privileged appetites, and not for the
er of unqualified knaves: how they prayed for
how the abbot swore by Saint Charity that he
them none: how one of them thereupon drew a
from under his smock-frock and blew three blasts,
he abbot and his train were instantly surrounded
owmen in green: how they tied him to a tree, and
say mass for their sins: how they unbound him,
im down with them to dinner, and gave him veni-
ld-fowl and wine, and made him pay for his fare
ey in his high selerer's portmanteau, and enforced
p all night under a tree in his cloak, and to leave the
d him in the morning: how the abbot, light in
l heavy in heart, raised the country upon Robin
so he had heard the chief forester called by his
hunted him into an old woman's cottage: how
nged dresses with the old woman, and how the
in great triumph into Nottingham, having in cus-
l woman in a green doublet and breeches: how
man discovered herself: how the merry men of
n laughed at the abbot: how the abbot railed at

the old woman, and how the old woman out-railed the abbot, telling him that Robin had given her food and firing through the winter, which no abbot would ever do, but would rather take it from her for what he called the good of the Church, by which he meant his own laziness and gluttony; and that she knew a true man from a false thief, and a free forester from a greedy abbot.

"Thus you see," added the sheriff, "how this villain perverts the deluded people by making them believe that those who tithe and toll upon them for their spiritual and temporal benefit are not their best friends and fatherly guardians; for he holds that in giving to boors and old women what he takes from priests and peers, he does but restore to the former what the latter had taken from them; and this the impudent varlet calls distributive justice. Judge now if any loyal subject can be safe in such neighbourhood."

While the sheriff was thus enlightening his companion concerning the offenders, and whetting his own indignation against them, the sun was fast sinking to the west. They rode on till they came in view of a bridge, which they saw a party approaching from the opposite side, and the knight presently discovered that the party consisted of the Lady Matilda and Friar Michael, young Gamwell, Cousin Robin, and about half-a-dozen foresters. The knight pointed out the earl to the sheriff, who exclaimed, "Here, then, we have him an easy prey;" and they rode on manfully towards the bridge, on which the other party made halt.

"Who be these," said the friar, "that come riding so fast this way? Now, as God shall judge me, it is that false knight Sir Ralph Montfaucon and the Sheriff of Nottingham, with a posse of men. We must make good our post, and let them dislodge us if they may."

The two parties were now near enough to parley; and the sheriff and the knight, advancing in the front of the cavalcade, called on the lady, the friar, young Gamwell, and the foresters, to deliver up that false traitor, Robert, formerly Earl of Huntingdon. Robert himself made answer by letting fly an arrow that struck the ground between the fore-feet of the sheriff's horse. The horse reared up from the whizzing, and lodged the sheriff in the dust; and, at the same time, the fair Matilda favoured the knight with an arrow in his *right* arm, that compelled him to withdraw from the affray.

His men lifted the sheriff carefully up, and replaced him on his horse, whom he immediately, with great rage and zeal, urged on to the assault, with his fifty men at his heels, some of whom were intercepted in their advance by the arrows of the foresters and Matilda; while the friar, with an eight-foot staff, dislodged the sheriff a second time, and laid on him with all the vigour of the Church militant on earth, in spite of his ejaculations of "Hey, Friar Michael! What means this, honest friar? Hold, ghostly friar! Hold, holy friar!"—till Matilda interposed, and delivered the battered sheriff to the care of the foresters. The friar continued flourishing his staff among the sheriff's men, knocking down one, breaking the ribs of another, dislocating the shoulder of a third, flattening the nose of a fourth, cracking the skull of a fifth, and pitching a sixth into the river, till the few who were lucky enough to escape with whole bones, clapped spurs to their horses and fled for their lives, under a farewell volley of arrows.

Sir Ralph's squire, meanwhile, was glad of the excuse of attending his master's wound, to absent himself from the battle; and put the poor knight to a great deal of unnecessary pain by making as long a business as possible of extracting the arrow, which he had not accomplished, when Matilda approaching, extracted it with great facility, and bound up the wound with her scarf, saying, "I reclaim my arrow, sir knight, which struck where I aimed it, to admonish you to desist from your enterprise. I could as easily have lodged it in your heart."

"It did not need," said the knight, with rueful gallantry; "you have lodged one there already."

"If you mean to say that you love me," said Matilda, "it is more than I ever shall you: but if you will show your love by no further interfering with mine, you will at least merit my gratitude."

The knight made a wry face under the double pain of heart and body caused at the same moment by the material or martial, and the metaphorical or erotic arrow, of which the latter was thus barbed by a declaration more candid than flattering; but he did not choose to put in any such claim to the lady's gratitude as would bar all hopes of her love: he therefore remained silent; and the lady and her escort, leaving him and the sheriff to the care of the squire, rode on till they came in sight of Arlingford Castle, when they parted in seve-

ral directions. The friar rode off alone; and after the foresters had lost sight of him, they heard his voice through the twilight, singing—

"A staff, a staff, of a young oak graff,
That is both stoure and stiff,
Is all a good friar can needs desire
To shrive a proud sheriffe.
And thou, fine fellôwe, who has tasted so
Of the forester's greenwood game,
Wilt be in no haste thy time to waste
In seeking more taste of the same:
Or this can I read thee, and riddle thee well,
Thou hadst better by far be the devil in hell,
Than the Sheriff of Nottinghãme."

CHAPTER VII.

Now, master sheriff, what's your will with me?
Henry IV.

MATILDA had carried her point with the baron of ranging at liberty whithersoever she would, under her positive promise to return home; she was a sort of prisoner on parole: she had obtained this indulgence by means of an obsolete habit of always telling the truth and keeping her word, which our enlightened age has discarded with other barbarisms, but which had the effect of giving her father so much confidence in her that he could not help considering her word a better security than locks and bars.

The baron had been one of the last to hear of the rumours of the new outlaws of Sherwood, as Matilda had taken all possible precautions to keep those rumours from his knowledge, fearing that they might cause the interruption of her greenwood liberty; and it was only during her absence at Gamwell feast, that the butler, being thrown off his guard by liquor, forgot her injunctions, and regaled the baron with a long story of the right merry adventure of Robin Hood and the Abbot of Doubleflask.

The baron was one morning, as usual, cutting his way *valorously* through a rampart of cold provision, when his ears

were suddenly assailed by a tremendous alarum, and sallying forth, and looking from his castle wall, he perceived a large party of armed men on the other side of the moat, who were calling on the warder, in the king's name, to lower the drawbridge and raise the portcullis, which had both been secured by Matilda's order. The baron walked along the battlement till he came opposite to these unexpected visitors, who, as soon as they saw him, called out, "Lower the drawbridge, in the king's name."

"For what, in the devil's name?" said the baron.

"The Sheriff of Nottingham," said one, "lies in bed grievously bruised, and many of his men are wounded, and several of them slain; and Sir Ralph Montfaucon, knight, is sore wounded in the arm; and we are charged to apprehend William Gamwell the younger, of Gamwell Hall, and Father Michael, of Rubygill Abbey, and Matilda Fitzwater, of Arlingford Castle, as agents and accomplices in the said breach of the king's peace."

"Breach of the king's fiddle-stick!" answered the baron. "What do you mean by coming here with your cock and bull stories of my daughter grievously bruising the Sheriff of Nottingham? You are a set of vagabond rascals in disguise; and I hear, by-the-by, there is a gang of thieves that has just set up business in Sherwood Forest: a pretty pretence, indeed, to get into my castle with force and arms, and make a famine in my buttery, and a drought in my cellar, and a void in my strong box, and a vacuum in my silver scullery."

"Lord Fitzwater," cried one, "take heed how you resist lawful authority: we will prove ourselves——"

"You will prove yourselves arrant knaves I doubt not," answered the baron; "but, villains, you shall be more grievously bruised by me than ever was the sheriff by my daughter (a pretty tale truly!), if you do not forthwith avoid my territory."

By this time the baron's men had flocked to the battlements, with long-bows and cross-bows, slings and stones, and Matilda, with her bow and quiver, at their head. The assailants, finding the castle so well defended, deemed it expedient to withdraw till they could return in greater force, and rode off to Rubygill Abbey, where they made known their errand to the father abbot, who, having satisfied himself of their legitimacy, and conned over the allegations, said that doubt-

less Brother Michael had heinously offended; but it was not for the civil law to take cognizance of the misdoings of a holy friar; that he would summon a chapter of monks, and pass on the offender a sentence proportionate to his offence. The ministers of civil justice said that would not do. The abbot said it would do and should; and bade them not provoke the meekness of his catholic charity to lay them under the curse of Rome. This threat had its effect, and the party rode off to Gamwell Hall, where they found the Gamwells and their men just sitting down to dinner, which they saved them the trouble of eating by consuming it in the king's name themselves, having first seized and bound young Gamwell; all which they accomplished by dint of superior numbers, in despite of a most vigorous stand made by the Gamwellites in defence of their young master and their provisions.

The baron, meanwhile, after the ministers of justice had departed, interrogated Matilda concerning the alleged fact of the grievous bruising of the Sheriff of Nottingham. Matilda told him the whole history of Gamwell feast, and of their battle on the bridge, which had its origin in a design of the Sheriff of Nottingham to take one of the foresters into custody.

"Ay! ay!" said the baron, "and I guess who that forester was; but truly this friar is a desperate fellow. I did not think there could have been so much valour under a gray frock. And so you wounded the knight in the arm. You are a wild girl, Mawd,—a chip of the old block, Mawd. A wild girl, and a wild friar, and three or four foresters, wild lads all, to keep a bridge against a tame knight, and a tame sheriff, and fifty tame varlets: by this light, the like was never heard! But do you know, Mawd, you must not go about so any more, sweet Mawd: you must stay at home, you must ensconce; for there is your tame sheriff on the one hand, that will take you perforce; and there is your wild forester on the other hand, that will take you without any force at all, Mawd: your wild forester, Robin, Cousin Robin, Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest, that beats and binds bishops, spreads nets for archbishops, and hunts a fat abbot as if he were a buck: excellent game, no doubt, but you must hunt no more in such company. I see it now: truly I might have guessed *before* that the bold outlaw Robin, the most courteous Robin,

the new thief of Sherwood Forest, was your lover, the earl that has been: I might have guessed it before, and what led you so much to the woods; but you hunt no more in such company. No more May games and Gamwell feasts. My lands and castle would be the forfeit of a few more such pranks; and I think they are as well in my hands as the king's, quite as well."

"You know, father," said Matilda, "the condition of keeping me at home: I get out if I can, and not on parole."

"Ay! ay!" said the baron, "if you can; very true: watch and ward, Mawd, watch and ward is my word: if you can, is yours. The mark is set, and so start fair."

The baron would have gone on in this way for an hour; but the friar made his appearance with a long oak staff in his hand, singing,—

> "Drink and sing, and eat and laugh,
> And so go forth to battle:
> For the top of a skull and the end of a staff
> Do make a ghostly rattle."

"Ho! ho! friar!" said the baron—"singing friar, laughing friar, roaring friar, fighting friar, hacking friar, thwacking friar; cracking, cracking, cracking friar; joke-cracking, bottle-cracking, skull-cracking friar!"

"And ho! ho!" said the friar—"bold baron, old baron, sturdy baron, wordy baron, long baron, strong baron, mighty baron, flighty baron, mazed baron, crazed baron, hacked baron, thwacked baron, cracked, cracked, cracked baron; bone-cracked, sconce-cracked, brain-cracked baron!"

"What do you mean," said the baron, "bully friar, by calling me hacked and thwacked?"

"Were you not in the wars," said the friar, "where he who escapes unhacked does more credit to his heels than his arms? I pay tribute to your valour in calling you hacked and thwacked."

"I never was thwacked in my life," said the baron; "I stood my ground manfully, and covered my body with my sword. If I had had the luck to meet with a fighting friar, indeed, I might have been thwacked, and soundly, too; but I hold myself a match for any two laymen; it takes nine fighting laymen to make a fighting friar."

"Whence come you now, holy father?" asked Matilda.

"From Rubygill Abbey," said the friar, "whither I never return:

"For I must seek some hermit cell,
Where I alone my beads may tell,
And on the wight who that way fares
Levy a toll for my ghostly pray'rs,
Levy a toll, levy a toll,
Levy a toll for my ghostly pray'rs."

"What is the matter then, father?" said Matilda.

"This is the matter," said the friar: "my holy brethren have held a chapter on me, and sentenced me to seven years' privation of wine. I therefore deemed it fitting to take my departure, which they would fain have prohibited. I was enforced to clear the way with my staff. I have grievously beaten my dearly beloved brethren: I grieve thereat; but they enforced me thereto. I have beaten them much; I mowed them down to the right and to the left, and left them like an ill-reaped field of wheat, ear and straw pointing all ways, scattered in singleness and jumbled in masses; and so bade them farewell, saying, Peace be with you. But I must not tarry, lest danger be in my rear: therefore, farewell, sweet Matilda: and farewell, noble baron: and farewell, sweet Matilda, again, the alpha and omega of Father Michael, the first and the last."

"Farewell, father," said the baron, a little softened; "and God send you be never assailed by more than fifty men at a time."

"Amen," said the friar, "to that good wish."

"And we shall meet again, father, I trust," said Matilda.

"When the storm is blown over," said the baron.

"Doubt it not," said the friar, "though flooded Trent were between us, and fifty devils guarded the bridge."

He kissed Matilda's forehead, and walked away without a song.

CHAPTER VIII.

Let gallows gape for dog: let man go free.—*Henry V.*

A PAGE had been brought up in Gamwell Hall, who, while he was little, had been called Little John, and continued to be so called after he had grown to be a foot taller than any other man in the house. He was full seven feet high. His latitude was worthy of his longitude, and his strength was worthy of both; and though an honest man by profession, he had practised archery on the king's deer for the benefit of his master's household, and for the improvement of his own eye and hand, till his aim had become infallible within the range of two miles. He had fought manfully in defence of his young master, took his captivity exceedingly to heart, and fell into bitter grief and boundless rage when he heard that he had been tried in Nottingham, and sentenced to die. Alice Gamwell, at Little John's request, wrote three letters of one tenour; and Little John, having attached them to three blunt arrows, saddled the fleetest steed in old Sir Guy of Gamwell's stables, mounted, and rode first to Arlingford Castle, where he shot one of the three arrows over the battlements; then to Rubygill Abbey, where he shot the second into the abbey garden; then back past Gamwell Hall to the borders of Sherwood Forest, where he shot the third into the wood. Now the first of these arrows lighted in the nape of the neck of Lord Fitzwater, and lodged itself firmly between his skin and his collar; the second rebounded with the hollow vibration of a drumstick from the shaven sconce of the Abbot of Rubygill; and the third pitched perpendicularly into the centre of a venison pasty in which Robin Hood was making incision.

Matilda ran up to her father in the court of Arlingford Castle, seized the arrow, drew off the letter, and concealed it in her bosom before the baron had time to look round, which he did with many expressions of rage against the impudent villain who had shot a blunt arrow into the nape of his neck.

"But you know, father," said Matilda, "a sharp arrow in the same place would have killed you; therefore the sending a blunt one was very considerate."

"Considerate, with a vengeance!" said the baron. "Where was the consideration of sending it at all? This is some of your forester's pranks. He has missed you in the forest, since I have kept watch and ward over you, and by way of a love-token and a remembrance to you takes a random shot at me."

The Abbot of Rubygill picked up the missive-missile or messenger arrow, which had rebounded from his shaven crown, with a very unghostly malediction on the sender, which he suddenly checked with a pious and consolatory reflection on the goodness of Providence in having blessed him with such a thickness of skull, to which he was now indebted for temporal preservation, as he had before been for spiritual promotion. He opened the letter which was addressed to Father Michael; and found it to contain an intimation that William Gamwell was to be hanged on Monday at Nottingham.

"And I wish," said the abbot, "Father Michael were to be hanged with him: an ungrateful monster, after I had rescued him from the fangs of civil justice, to reward my lenity by not leaving a bone unbruised among the holy brotherhood of Rubygill."

Robin Hood extracted from his venison pasty a similar intimation of the evil destiny of his cousin, whom he determined, if possible, to rescue from the jaws of Cerberus.

The Sheriff of Nottingham, though still sore with his bruises, was so intent on revenge, that he raised himself from his bed to attend the execution of William Gamwell. He rode to the august structure of retributive Themis, as the French call a gallows, in all the pride and pomp of shrievalty, and with a splendid retinue of well-equipped knaves and varlets, as our ancestors called honest serving-men.

Young Gamwell was brought forth with his arms pinioned behind him; his sister Alice and his father, Sir Guy, attending him in a disconsolate mood. He had rejected the confessor provided by the sheriff, and had insisted on the privilege of choosing his own, whom Little John had promised to bring. Little John, however, had not made his appearance when the fatal procession had began its march; but when they reached the place of execution, Little John appeared, accompanied by a ghostly friar.

"Sheriff," said young Gamwell, "let me not die with my

hands pinioned: give me a sword, and set any odds of your men against me, and let me die the death of a man, like the descendant of a noble house, which has never yet been stained with ignominy."

"No, no," said the sheriff; "I have had enough of setting odds against you. I have sworn you shall be hanged, and hanged you shall be."

"Then God have mercy on me," said young Gamwell; "and now, holy friar, shrive my sinful soul."

The friar approached.

"Let me see this friar," said the sheriff: "if he be the friar of the bridge, I had as lief have the devil in Nottingham; but he shall find me too much for him here."

"The friar of the bridge," said Little John, "as you very well know, sheriff, was Father Michael of Rubygill Abbey, and you may easily see that this is not the man."

"I see it," said the sheriff, "and God be thanked for his absence."

Young Gamwell stood at the foot of the ladder. The friar approached him, opened his book, groaned, turned up the whites of his eyes, tossed up his arms in the air, and said "*Dominus vobiscum.*" He then crossed both his hands on his breast under the folds of his holy robes, and stood a few moments as if in inward prayer. A deep silence among the attendant crowd accompanied this action of the friar; interrupted only by the hollow tone of the death-bell, at long and dreary intervals. Suddenly the friar threw off his holy robes, and appeared a forester clothed in green, with a sword in his right hand and a horn in his left. With the sword he cut the bonds of William Gamwell, who instantly snatched a sword from one of the miller's men; and with the horn he blew a loud blast, which was answered at once by four bugles from the quarters of the four winds, and from each quarter came five and twenty bowmen running all on a row.

"Treason! treason!" cried the sheriff. Old Sir Guy sprung to his son's side, and so did Little John; and the four setting back to back, kept the sheriff and his men at bay till the bowmen came within shot and let fly their arrows among the sheriff's men, who, after a brief resistance, fled in all directions. The forester who had personated the friar sent an arrow after the flying sheriff, calling with a strong voice, "To the sheriff's left arm, as a keepsake from Robin Hood." The

arrow reached its destiny; the sheriff redoubled his speed, and, with the one arrow in his arm, did not stop to breathe till he was out of reach of another.

The foresters did not waste time in Nottingham, but were soon at a distance from its walls. Sir Guy returned with Alice to Gamwell Hall; but thinking he should not be safe there, from the share he had had in his son's rescue, they only remained long enough to supply themselves with clothes and money, and departed, under the escort of Little John, to another seat of the Gamwells in Yorkshire. Young Gamwell, taking it for granted that his offence was past remission, determined on joining Robin Hood, and accompanied him to the forest, where it was deemed expedient that he should change his name; and he was rechristened without a priest, and with wine instead of water, by the immortal name of Scarlet.

CHAPTER IX.

Who set my man i' the stocks?——
I set him there, sir: but his own disorders
Deserved much less advancement.—*Lear.*

THE baron was inflexible in his resolution not to let Matilda leave the castle. The letter which announced to her the approaching fate of young Gamwell, filled her with grief, and increased the irksomeness of a privation which already preyed sufficiently on her spirits, and began to undermine her health. She had no longer the consolation of the society of her old friend Father Michael: the little fat friar of Rubygill was substituted as the castle confessor, not without some misgivings in his ghostly bosom; but he was more allured by the sweet savour of the good things of this world at Arlingford Castle, than deterred by his awe of the Lady Matilda, which nevertheless was so excessive, from his recollection of the twang of the bow-string, that he never ventured to find her in the wrong, much less to enjoin anything in the shape of penance, as was the occasional practice of holy confessors, with or without cause, for the sake of pious discipline, and what was in those days called social order, namely, the preservation of the privileges of the few who happened to have any, at the expense of the swinish multi-

tude who happened to have none, except that of working and being shot at for the benefit of their betters, which is obviously not the meaning of social order in our more enlightened times: let us therefore be grateful to Providence, and sing *Te Deum laudamus* in chorus with the Holy Alliance.

The little friar, however, though he found the lady spotless, found the butler a great sinner: at least so it was conjectured, from the length of time he always took to confess him in the buttery.

Matilda became every day more pale and dejected: her spirit, which could have contended against any strenuous affliction, pined in the monotonous inaction to which she was condemned. While she could freely range the forest with her lover in the morning, she had been content to return to her father's castle in the evening, thus preserving underanged the balance of her duties, habits, and affections; not without a hope that the repeal of her lover's outlawry might be eventually obtained, by a judicious distribution of some of his forest spoils among the holy fathers and saints-that-were-to-be,—pious proficients in the ecclesiastic art equestrian, who rode the conscience of King Henry with double-curb bridles, and kept it well in hand when it showed mettle, and seemed inclined to rear and plunge. But the affair at Gamwell feast threw many additional difficulties in the way of the accomplishment of this hope; and very shortly afterwards King Henry the Second went to make up in the next world his quarrel with Thomas-à-Becket; and Richard Cœur de Lion made all England resound with preparations for the crusade, to the great delight of many zealous adventurers, who eagerly flocked under his banner in the hope of enriching themselves with Saracen spoil, which they called fighting the battles of God. Richard, who was not remarkably scrupulous in his financial operations, was not likely to overlook the lands and castle of Locksley, which he appropriated immediately to his own purposes, and sold to the highest bidder. Now, as the repeal of the outlawry would involve the restitution of the estates to the rightful owner, it was obvious that it could never be expected from that most legitimate and most Christian king, Richard the First of England, the arch-crusader and anti-jacobin by excellence,—the very type, flower, cream, pink, symbol, and mirror of all the Holy Alliances that have ever existed on earth, excepting that he seasoned his superstí-

tion and love of conquest with a certain condiment of romantic generosity and chivalrous self-devotion, with which his imitators in all other points have found it convenient to dispense. To give freely to one man what he had taken forcibly from another, was generosity of which he was very capable; but to restore what he had taken to the man from whom he had taken it, was something that wore too much of the cool physiognomy of justice to be easily reconcilable to his kingly feelings. He had, besides, not only sent all King Henry's saints about their business, but or rather about their no-business—their *fainéantise*—but he laid them under rigorous contribution for the purposes of his holy war; and having made them refund to the piety of the successor what they had extracted from the piety of the precursor, he compelled them, in addition, to give him their blessing for nothing. Matilda, therefore, from all these circumstances, felt little hope that her lover would be anything but an outlaw for life.

The departure of King Richard from England was succeeded by the episcopalian regency of the Bishops of Ely and Durham. Longchamp, Bishop of Ely, proceeded to show his sense of Christian fellowship by arresting his brother-bishop, and despoiling him of his share in the government; and to set forth his humility and loving-kindness in a retinue of nobles and knights who consumed in one night's entertainment some five years' revenue of their entertainers, and in a guard of fifteen hundred foreign soldiers, whom he considered indispensable to the exercise of a vigour beyond the law in maintaining wholesome discipline over the refractory English. The ignorant impatience of the swinish multitude with these fruits of good living, brought forth by one of the meek who had inherited the earth, displayed itself in a general ferment, of which Prince John took advantage to make the experiment of getting possession of his brother's crown in his absence. He began by calling at Reading a council of barons, whose aspect induced the holy bishop to disguise himself (some say as an old woman, which, in the twelfth century, perhaps might have been a disguise for a bishop), and make his escape beyond sea. Prince John followed up his advantage by obtaining possession of several strong posts, and among others of the castle of Nottingham.

While John was conducting his operations at Nottingham, he rode at times past the castle of Arlingford. He stopped

on one occasion to claim Lord Fitzwater's hospitality, and made most princely havoc among his venison and brawn. Now it is a matter of record among divers great historians and learned clerks, that he was then and there grievously smitten by the charms of the lovely Matilda, and that a few days after he despatched his travelling minstrel, or laureate, Harpiton* (whom he retained at moderate wages, to keep a journal of his proceedings, and prove them all just and legitimate), to the castle of Arlingford, to make proposals to the lady. This Harpiton was a very useful person. He was always ready, not only to maintain the cause of his master with his pen, and to sing his eulogies to his harp, but to undertake at a moment's notice any kind of courtly employment, called dirty work by the profane, which the blessings of civil government, namely, his master's pleasure, and the interests of social order, namely, his own emolument, might require. In short,

> Il eût l'emploi qui certes n'est pas mince,
> Et qu'à la cour, où tout se peint en beau,
> On appelloit être l'ami du prince ;
> Mais qu'à la ville, et surtout en province,
> Les gens grossiers ont nommé maquereau.

Prince John was of opinion that the love of a prince actual and king expectant, was in itself a sufficient honour to the daughter of a simple baron, and that the right divine of royalty would make it sufficiently holy without the rite divine of the church. He was, therefore, graciously pleased to fall into an exceeding passion, when his confidential messenger returned from his embassy in piteous plight, having been by the baron's order, first tossed in a blanket and set in the stocks to cool, and afterwards ducked in the moat and set again in the stocks to dry. John swore to revenge horribly this flagrant outrage on royal prerogative, and to obtain possession of the lady by force of arms ; and accordingly collected a body of troops, and marched upon Arlingford Castle. A letter, conveyed as before on the point of a blunt arrow, announced his approach to Matilda : and Lord Fitzwater had just time to assemble his retainers, collect a hasty supply of provision, raise the drawbridge, and drop the portcullis, when the castle was surrounded by the enemy. The little fat friar, who during the

* Harp-it-on ; or, a *corruption* of Ἑρπετον, a creeping thing.

confusion was asleep in the buttery, found himself, on awaking, inclosed in the besieged castle, and dolefully bewailed his evil chance.

CHAPTER X.

A noble girl, i' faith. Heart! I think I fight with a familiar, or the ghost of a fencer. Call you this an amorous visage? Here's blood that would have served me these seven years, in broken heads and cut fingers, and now it runs out all together.—MIDDLETON. *Roaring Girl.*

PRINCE JOHN sat down impatiently before Arlingford Castle in the hope of starving out the besieged; but finding the duration of their supplies extend itself in an equal ratio with the prolongation of his hope, he made vigorous preparations for carrying the place by storm. He constructed an immense machine on wheels, which, being advanced to the edge of the moat, would lower a temporary bridge, of which one end would rest on the bank and the other on the battlements, and which, being well furnished with stepping boards, would enable his men to ascend the inclined plane with speed and facility. Matilda received intimation of this design by the usual friendly channel of a blunt arrow, which must either have been sent from some secret friend in the prince's camp, or from some vigorous archer beyond it: the latter will not appear improbable, when we consider that Robin Hood and Little John could shoot two English miles and an inch point blank.

Come scrive Turpino, che non erra.

The machine was completed, and the ensuing morning fixed for the assault. Six men, relieved at intervals, kept watch over it during the night. Prince John retired to sleep, congratulating himself in the expectation that another day would place the fair culprit at his princely mercy. His anticipations mingled with the visions of his slumber, and he dreamed of wounds and drums, and sacking and firing the castle, and bearing off in his arms the beautiful prize through the midst of fire and smoke. In the height of this imaginary turmoil,

he awoke, and conceived for a few moments that certain sounds which rang in his ears, were the continuation of those of his dream, in that sort of half-consciousness between sleeping and waking, when reality and phantasy meet and mingle in dim and confused resemblance. He was, however, very soon fully awake to the fact of his guards calling on him to arm, which he did in haste, and beheld the machine in flames, and a furious conflict raging around it. He hurried to the spot, and found that his camp had been suddenly assailed from one side by a party of foresters, and that the baron's people had made a sortie on the other, and that they had killed the guards, and set fire to the machine, before the rest of the camp could come to the assistance of their fellows.

The night was in itself intensely [illegible], and the fire-light shed around it a vivid and unnatural radiance. On one side, the crimson light quivered by its [illegible] the waveless moat, and on the bastion [illegible] castle, and their shadows lay in massy blackness [illegible] walls: on the other, it shone upon [illegible] within among the open trunks, or [illegible] The circumference of darkness bounded [illegible] and in the centre raged the war; [illegible] gleaming and glittering as they rang and [illegible] other; plumes confusedly tossing in the [illegible] light, and the massy light and shade that fell on the faces of the combatants, giving additional energy to their [illegible] expression.

John, drawing nearer to the scene of action, observed two young warriors fighting side by side, one of whom [illegible] the habit of a forester, the other that of a [illegible] He looked intently on them both: [illegible] the [illegible] favoured the scrutiny: and the [illegible] very speedily discovered that the latter was the fair Matilda. The forester he did not know: but he had sufficient tact to discern that his success would be very much facilitated by separating her from this companion, above all others. He therefore formed a party of men into a wedge, only taking especial care not to be the point of it himself, and drove it between them with so much precision, that they were in a moment far asunder.

"Lady Matilda," said John, "yield yourself my prisoner."

"If you would wear me, prince," said Matilda, "you must win me," and without giving him time to deliberate on the

courtesy of fighting with the lady of his love, she raised her sword in the air, and lowered it on his head with an impetus that would have gone nigh to fathom even that extraordinary depth of brain which always by divine grace furnishes the interior of a head-royal, if he had not very dexterously parried the blow. Prince John wished to disarm and take captive, not in any way to wound or injure, least of all to kill, his fair opponent. Matilda was only intent to get rid of her antagonist at any rate: the edge of her weapon painted his complexion with streaks of very unloverlike crimson, and she would probably have marred John's hand for ever signing Magna Charta, but that he was backed by the advantage of numbers, and that her sword broke short on the boss of his buckler. John was following up his advantage to make a captive of the lady, when he was suddenly felled to the earth by an unseen antagonist. Some of his men picked him carefully up and conveyed him to his tent, stunned and stupefied.

When he recovered, he found Harpiton diligently assisting in his recovery, more in the fear of losing his place than in that of losing his master: the prince's first inquiry was for the prisoner he had been on the point of taking at the moment when his *habeas corpus* was so unseasonably suspended. He was told that his people had been on the point of securing the said prisoner, when the devil suddenly appeared among them in the likeness of a tall friar, having his gray frock cinctured with a sword-belt, and his crown, which whether it were shaven or no they could not see, surmounted with a helmet, and flourishing an eight-foot staff, with which he laid about him to the right and to the left, knocking down the prince and his men as if they had been so many nine-pins: in fine, he had rescued the prisoner, and made a clear passage through friend and foe, and in conjunction with a chosen party of archers, had covered the retreat of the baron's men and the foresters, who had all gone off in a body towards Sherwood Forest.

Harpiton suggested that it would be desirable to sack the castle, and volunteered to lead the van on the occasion, as the defenders were withdrawn, and the exploit seemed to promise much profit and little danger: John considered that the castle would in itself be a great acquisition to him, as a stronghold in furtherance of his design on his brother's throne; and was determining to take possession with the first light of morning, when he had the mortification to see the castle

burst into flames in several places at once. A piteous cry was heard from within, and while the prince was proclaiming a reward to any one who would enter into the burning pile, and elucidate the mystery of the doleful voice, forth waddled the little fat friar in an agony of fear, out of the fire into the frying-pan; for he was instantly taken into custody and carried before Prince John, wringing his hands and tearing his hair.

"Are you the friar," said Prince John, in a terrible voice, "that laid me prostrate in battle, mowed down my men like grass, rescued my captive, and covered the retreat of my enemies? And, not content with this, have you now set fire to the castle in which I intended to take up my royal quarters?"

The little friar quaked like a jelly: he fell on his knees, and attempted to speak; but in his eagerness to vindicate himself from this accumulation of alarming charges, he knew not where to begin; his ideas rolled round upon each other like the radii of a wheel; the words he desired to utter, instead of issuing, as it were, in a right line from his lips, seemed to conglobate themselves into a sphere turning on its own axis in his throat: after several ineffectual efforts, his utterance totally failed him, and he remained gasping, with his mouth open, his lips quivering, his hands clasped together, and the whites of his eyes turned up towards the prince with an expression most ruefully imploring.

"Are you that friar?" repeated the prince.

Several of the bystanders declared that he was not that friar. The little friar, encouraged by this patronage, found his voice, and pleaded for mercy. The prince questioned him closely concerning the burning of the castle. The little friar declared, that he had been in too great fear during the siege to know much of what was going forward, except that he had been conscious during the last few days of a lamentable deficiency of provisions, and had been present that very morning at the broaching of the last butt of sack. Harpiton groaned in sympathy. The little friar added, that he knew nothing of what had passed since, till he heard the flames roaring at his elbow.

"Take him away, Harpiton," said the prince, "fill him with sack, and turn him out."

"Never mind the sack," said the little friar, "turn me out at once."

"A sad chance," said Harpiton, "to be turned out without sack."

But what Harpiton thought a sad chance the little friar thought a merry one, and went bounding like a fat buck towards the abbey of Rubygill.

An arrow, with a letter attached to it, was shot into the camp, and carried to the prince. The contents were these :—

"PRINCE JOHN,—I do not consider myself to have resisted lawful authority in defending my castle against you, seeing that you are at present in a state of active rebellion against your liege sovereign Richard : and if my provisions had not failed me, I would have maintained it till doomsday. As it is, I have so well disposed my combustibles that it shall not serve you as a stronghold in your rebellion. If you hunt in the chases of Nottinghamshire, you may catch other game than my daughter. Both she and I are content to be houseless for a time, in the reflection that we have deserved your enmity, and the friendship of Cœur-de-Lion.

"FITZWATER."

CHAPTER XI.

—Tuck, the merry friar, who many a sermon made
In praise of Robin Hood, his outlaws, and their trade.—DRAYTON.

THE baron, with some of his retainers and all the foresters, halted at daybreak in Sherwood Forest. The foresters quickly erected tents, and prepared an abundant breakfast of venison and ale.

"Now, Lord Fitzwater," said the chief forester, "recognize your son-in-law that was to have been, in the outlaw Robin Hood."

"Ay, ay," said the baron, "I have recognized you long ago."

"And recognize your young friend Gamwell," said the second, "in the outlaw Scarlet."

"And Little John, the page," said the third, "in Little John the outlaw."

"And Father Michael, of Rubygill Abbey," said the friar,

"in Friar Tuck, of Sherwood Forest. Truly, I have a chapel here hard by, in the shape of a hollow tree, where I put up my prayers for travellers, and Little John holds the plate at the door, for good praying deserves good paying."

"I am in fine company," said the baron.

"In the very best of company," said the friar, "in the high court of Nature, and in the midst of her own nobility. Is it not so? This goodly grove is our palace: the oak and the beech are its colonnade and its canopy: the sun and the moon and the stars are its everlasting lamps: the grass, and the daisy, and the primrose, and the violet, are its many-coloured floor of green, white, yellow, and blue; the May-flower, and the woodbine, and the eglantine, and the ivy, are its decorations, its curtains, and its tapestry: the lark, and the thrush, and the linnet, and the nightingale, are its unhired minstrels and musicians. Robin Hood is king of the forest both by dignity of birth and by virtue of his standing army: to say nothing of the free choice of his people, which he has indeed, but I pass it by as an illegitimate basis of power. He holds his dominion over the forest, and its horned multitude of citizen-deer, and its swinish multitude or peasantry of wild boars, by right of conquest and force of arms. He levies contributions among them by the free consent of his archers, their virtual representatives. If they should find a voice to complain that we are 'tyrants and usurpers to kill and cook them up in their assigned and native dwelling-place,' we should most convincingly admonish them, with point of arrow, that they have nothing to do with our laws but to obey them. Is it not written that the fat ribs of the herd shall be fed upon by the mighty in the land? And have not they withal my blessing?—my orthodox, canonical, and archiepiscopal blessing? Do I not give thanks for them when they are well roasted and smoking under my nose? What title had William of Normandy to England, that Robin of Locksley has not to merry Sherwood? William fought for his claim. So does Robin. With whom, both? With any that would, or will dispute it. William raised contributions. So does Robin. From whom, both? From all that they could or can make pay them. Why did any pay them to William? Why do any pay them to Robin? For the same reason to both: because they could not, or cannot help it. They differ, indeed, in this, that William took from the poor and gave to

the rich, and Robin takes from the rich and gives to the poor: and therein is Robin illegitimate: though in all else he is true prince. Scarlet and John, are they not peers of the forest?—lords temporal of Sherwood? And am not I lord spiritual? Am I not archbishop? Am I not pope? Do I not consecrate their banner and absolve their sins? Are not they state, and am not I Church? Are not they state monarchical, and am not I Church militant? Do I not excommunicate our enemies from venison and brawn, and by 'r Lady, when need calls, beat them down under my feet? The state levies tax, and the Church levies tithe. Even so do we. Mass, we take all at once. What then? It is tax by redemption, and tithe by commutation. Your William and Richard can cut and come again, but our Robin deals with slippery subjects that come not twice to his exchequer. What need we then to constitute a court, except a fool and a laureate? For the fool, his only use is to make false knaves merry by art, and we are true men, and are merry by nature. For the laureate, his only office is to find virtues in those who have none, and to drink sack for his pains. We have quite virtue enough to need him not, and can drink our sack for ourselves."

"Well preached, friar," said Robin Hood: "yet there is one thing wanting to constitute a court, and that is a queen. And now, lovely Matilda, look round upon these sylvan shades where we have so often roused the stag from his ferny covert. The rising sun smiles upon us through the stems of that beechen knoll. Shall I take your hand, Matilda, in the presence of this my court? Shall I crown you with our wild-wood coronal, and hail you Queen of the Forest? Will you be the Queen Matilda of your own true King Robin?"

Matilda smiled assent.

"Not Matilda," said the friar: "the rules of our holy alliance require new birth. We have excepted in favour of Little John, because he is great John, and his name is a misnomer. I sprinkle, not thy forehead with water, but thy lips with wine, and baptize thee MARIAN."

"Here is a pretty conspiracy," exclaimed the baron. "Why, you villanous friar, think you to nickname and marry my daughter before my face with impunity?"

"Even so, bold baron," said the friar; "we are strongest here. Say you, might overcomes right? I say no. There is

no right but might: and to say that might overcomes right is to say that right overcomes itself: an absurdity most palpable. Your right was the stronger in Arlingford, and ours is the stronger in Sherwood. Your right was right as long as you could maintain it; so is ours. So is King Richard's, with all deference be it spoken; and so is King Saladin's; and their two mights are now committed in bloody fray, and that which overcomes will be right, just as long as it lasts, and as far as it reaches. And now, if any of you know any just impediment——"

"Fire and fury!" said the baron.

"Fire and fury," said the friar, "are modes of that might which constitutes right, and are just impediments to anything against which they can be brought to bear. They are our allies upon occasion, and would declare for us now, if you should put them to the test."

"Father," said Matilda, "you know the terms of our compact: from the moment you restrained my liberty, you renounced your claim to all but compulsory obedience. The friar argues well. Right ends with might. Thick walls, dreary galleries, and tapestried chambers, were indifferent to me while I could leave them at pleasure, but have ever been hateful to me since they held me by force. May I never again have roof but the blue sky, nor canopy but the green leaves, nor barrier but the forest-bounds; with the foresters to my train, Little John to my page, Friar Tuck to my ghostly adviser, and Robin Hood to my liege lord. I am no longer Lady Matilda Fitzwater, of Arlingford Castle, but plain Maid Marian, of Sherwood Forest."

"Long live Maid Marian!" re-echoed the foresters.

"Oh, false girl!" said the baron, "do you renounce your name and parentage?"

"Not my parentage," said Marian, "but my name indeed: do not all maids renounce it at the altar?"

"The altar!" said the baron: "grant me patience! what do you mean by the altar?"

"Pile green turf," said the friar; "wreathe it with flowers, and crown it with fruit, and we will show the noble baron what we mean by the altar."

The foresters did as the friar directed.

"Now, Little John," said the friar, "on with the cloak of

the Abbot of Doubleflask. I appoint thee my clerk: thou art here duly elected in full mote."

"I wish you were all in full mote together," said the baron, "and smooth wall on both sides."

"Punnest thou?" said the friar. "A heinous, anti-Christian offence. Why anti-Christian? Because anti-Catholic. Why anti-Catholic? Because anti-Roman. Why anti-Roman? Because Carthaginian. Is not pun from Punic? *punica fides:* the very quint-essential quiddity of bad faith: double-visaged: double-tongued. He that will make a pun will—— I say no more. Fie on it. Stand forth, clerk. Who is the bride's father?"

"There is no bride's father," said the baron. "I am the father of Matilda Fitzwater."

"There is none such," said the friar. "This is the fair Maid Marian. Will you make a virtue of necessity, or will you give laws to the flowing tide? Will you give her, or shall Robin take her? Will you be her true natural father, or shall I commute paternity? Stand forth, Scarlet."

"Stand back, Sirrah Scarlet," said the baron. "My daughter shall have no father but me. Needs must when the devil drives."

"No matter who drives," said the friar, "so that, like a well-disposed subject, you yield cheerful obedience to those who can enforce it."

"Mawd, sweet Mawd," said the baron, "will you then forsake your poor old father in his distress, with his castle in ashes, and his enemy in power?"

"Not so, father," said Marian; "I will always be your true daughter: I will always love, and serve, and watch, and defend you: but neither will I forsake my plighted love, and my own liege lord, who was your choice before he was mine, for you made him my associate in infancy; and that he continued to be mine when he ceased to be yours, does not in any way show remissness in my duties, or falling off in my affections. And though I here plight my troth at the altar to Robin, in the presence of this holy priest and pious clerk, yet . . . . Father, when Richard returns from Palestine, he will restore you to your barony, and perhaps, for your sake, your daughter's husband to the earldom of Huntingdon: should that never be, should it be the will of fate that

we must live and die in the greenwood, I will live and die MAID MARIAN."*

"A pretty resolution," said the baron, "if Robin will let you keep it."

"I have sworn it," said Robin. "Should I expose her tenderness to the perils of maternity, when life and death may hang on shifting at a moment's notice from Sherwood to Barnsdale, and from Barnsdale to the sea-shore? And why should I banquet when my merry men starve? Chastity is our forest law, and even the friar has kept it since he has been here."

"Truly so," said the friar; "for temptation dwells with ease and luxury: but the hunter is Hippolytus, and the huntress is Dian. And now, dearly beloved——"

The friar went through the ceremony with great unction, and Little John was most clerical in the intonation of his responses. After which, the friar sang, and Little John fiddled, and the foresters danced, Robin with Marian, and Scarlet with the baron; and the venison smoked, and the ale frothed, and the wine sparkled, and the sun went down on their unwearied festivity; which they wound up with the following song, the friar leading, and the foresters joining chorus:—

Oh! bold Robin Hood is a forester good,
As ever drew bow in the merry greenwood:
At his bugle's shrill singing the echoes are ringing,
The wild deer are springing for many a rood:
Its summons we follow, through brake, over hollow,
The thrice-blown shrill summons of bold Robin Hood.

And what eye hath ere seen such a sweet Maiden Queen
As Marian the pride of the forester's green?
A sweet garden-flower, she blooms in the bower,
Where alone to this hour the wild rose has been
We hail her in duty the queen of all beauty:
We will live, we will die by our sweet Maiden Queen.

And here's a gray friar, good as heart can desire,
To absolve all our sins as the case may require:
Who with courage so stout, lays his oak-plant about,
And puts to the rout all the foes of his choir:

* And therefore is she called Maid Marian,
Because she leads a spotless maiden life,
And shall till Robin's outlaw life have end.—*Old Play.*

For we are his choristers, we merry foresters,
Chorusing thus with our militant friar.

And Scarlet doth bring his good yew-bough and string,
Prime minister is he of Robin our king:
No mark is too narrow for Little John's arrow,
That hits a cock-sparrow a mile on the wing;
Robin and Mariòn, Scarlet and Little John,
Long with their glory old Sherwood shall ring.

Each a good liver, for well-feathered quiver
Doth furnish brawn, venison, and fowl of the river:
But the best game we dish-up, it is a fat bishop:
When his angels we fish up, he proves a free giver:
For a prelate so lowly has angels more holy,
And should this world's false angels to sinners deliver.

Robin and Mariòn, Scarlet and Little John,
Drink to them one by one, drink as ye sing:
Robin and Mariòn, Scarlet and Little John,
Echo to echo through Sherwood shall fling:
Robin and Mariòn, Scarlet and Little John,
Long with their glory old Sherwood shall ring.

CHAPTER XII.

A single volume paramount: a code:
A master spirit: a determined road.—WORDSWORTH.

THE next morning Robin Hood convened his foresters, and desired Little John, for the baron's edification, to read over the laws of their forest society. Little John read aloud with a stentorophonic voice:—

"At a high court of foresters, held under the greenwood tree, an hour after sunrise, Robin Hood president, William Scarlet vice-president, Little John secretary: the following articles, moved by Friar Tuck, in his capacity of Peer Spiritual, and seconded by Much the Miller, were unanimously agreed to.

"The principles of our society are six: Legitimacy, Equity, Hospitality, Chivalry, Chastity, and Courtesy.

"The articles of Legitimacy are four:

"I. Our government is legitimate, and our society is founded on the one golden rule of right, consecrated by the *universal* consent of mankind, and by the practice of all

ages, individuals, and nations: namely, To keep what we have, and to catch what we can.

"II. Our government being legitimate, all our proceedings shall be legitimate: wherefore we declare war against the whole world, and every forester is by this legitimate declaration legitimately invested with a roving commission, to make lawful prize of everything that comes in his way.

"III. All forest laws but our own we declare to be null and void.

"IV. All such of the old laws of England as do not in any way interfere with, or militate against, the views of this honourable assembly, we will loyally adhere to and maintain. The rest we declare null and void as far as relates to ourselves, in all cases wherein a vigour beyond the law may be conducive to our own interest and preservation.

"The articles of Equity are three:

"I. The balance of power among the people being very much deranged, by one having too much and another nothing, we hereby resolve ourselves into a congress or court of equity, to restore as far as in us lies the said natural balance of power, by taking from all who have too much as much of the said too much as we can lay our hands on; and giving to those who have nothing such a portion thereof as it may seem to us expedient to part with.

"II. In all cases a quorum of foresters shall constitute a court of equity, and as many as may be strong enough to manage the matter in hand shall constitute a quorum.

"III. All usurers, monks, courtiers, and other drones of the great hive of society, who shall be found laden with any portion of the honey whereof they have wrongfully despoiled the industrious bee, shall be rightfully despoiled thereof in turn; and all bishops and abbots shall be bound and beaten,*

* "These byshoppes and these archbyshoppes
Ye shall them bete and bynde,"

says Robin Hood, in an old ballad. Perhaps, however, this is to be taken not in a literal, but in a figurative sense, from the binding and beating of wheat: for as all rich men were Robin's harvest, the bishops and archbishops must have been the finest and fattest ears among them, from which Robin merely proposes to thresh the grain when he directs them to be bound and beaten: and as Pharaoh's fat kine were typical of fat ears of wheat, so may fat ears of wheat, *mutatis mutandis*, be typical of fat kine.

especially the Abbot of Doncaster; as shall also all sheriffs, especially the Sheriff of Nottingham.

"The articles of Hospitality are two:

"I. Postmen, carriers, and market-folk, peasants and mechanics, farmers and millers, shall pass through our forest dominions without let or molestation.

"II. All other travellers through the forest shall be graciously invited to partake of Robin's hospitality; and if they come not willingly they shall be compelled; and the rich man shall pay well for his fare; and the poor man shall feast scot free, and peradventure receive bounty in proportion to his desert and necessity.

"The article of Chivalry is one:

"I. Every forester shall, to the extent of his power, aid and protect maids, widows, and orphans, and all weak and distressed persons whomsoever: and no woman shall be impeded or molested in any way; nor shall any company receive harm which any woman is in.

"The article of Chastity is one:

"I. Every forester, being Diana's forester and minion of the moon, shall commend himself to the grace of the Virgin, and shall have the gift of continency on pain of expulsion: that the article of chivalry may be secure from infringement, and maids, wives, and widows pass without fear through the forest.

"The article of Courtesy is one:

"I. No one shall miscall a forester. He who calls Robin Robert of Huntingdon, or salutes him by any other title or designation whatsoever except plain Robin Hood; or who calls Marian Matilda Fitzwater, or salutes her by any other title or designation whatsoever except plain Maid Marian; and so of all others; shall for every such offence forfeit a mark, to be paid to the friar.

"And these articles we swear to keep as we are good men and true. Carried by acclamation. God save King Richard.

"LITTLE JOHN, Secretary."

"Excellent laws," said the baron: "excellent, by the holy rood. William of Normandy, with my great-great-grandfather Fierabras at his elbow, could not have made better. And now, sweet Mawd——"

"A fine, a fine," cried the friar, "a fine, by the article of *courtesy*."

"Od's life," said the baron, "shall I not call my own daughter Mawd? Methinks there should be a special exception in my favour."

"It must not be," said Robin Hood: "our constitution admits no privilege."

"But I will commute," said the friar; "for twenty marks a year duly paid into my ghostly pocket you shall call your daughter Mawd two hundred times a day."

"Gramercy," said the baron, "and I agree, honest friar, when I can get twenty marks to pay: for till Prince John be beaten from Nottingham, my rents are like to prove but scanty."

"I will trust," said the friar, "and thus let us ratify the stipulation; so shall our laws and your infringement run together in an amicable parallel."

"But," said Little John, "this is a bad precedent, master friar. It is turning discipline into profit, penalty into perquisite, public justice into private revenue. It is rank corruption, master friar."

"Why are laws made?" said the friar. "For the profit of somebody. Of whom? Of him who makes them first, and of others as it may happen. Was not I legislator in the last article, and shall I not thrive by my own law?"

"Well then, sweet Mawd," said the baron, "I must leave you, Mawd: your life is very well for the young and the hearty, but it squares not with my age or my humour. I must house, Mawd. I must find refuge: but where? That is the question."

"Where Sir Guy of Gamwell has found it," said Robin Hood, "near the borders of Barnsdale. There you may dwell in safety with him and fair Alice, till King Richard return, and Little John shall give you safe conduct. You will have need to travel with caution, in disguise and without attendants, for Prince John commands all this vicinity, and will doubtless lay the country for you and Marian. Now it is first expedient to dismiss your retainers. If there be any among them who like our life, they may stay with us in the greenwood; the rest may return to their homes."

Some of the baron's men resolved to remain with Robin and Marian, and were furnished accordingly with suits of green, of which Robin always kept good store.

Marian now declared that as there was danger in the way

to Barnsdale, she would accompany Little John and the bar as she would not be happy unless she herself saw her fatl placed in security. Robin was very unwilling to consent this, and assured her that there was more danger for her th the baron : but Marian was absolute.

"If so, then," said Robin, "I shall be your guide instead Little John, and I shall leave him and Scarlet joint-rege of Sherwood during my absence, and the voice of Friar Tu shall be decisive between them if they differ in nice questic of state policy." Marian objected to this, that there w more danger for Robin than either herself or the baron : t Robin was absolute in his turn.

"Talk not of my voice," said the friar ; "for if Marian a damsel errant, I will be her ghostly esquire."

Robin insisted that this should not be, for number wou only expose them to greater risk of detection. The friar, af some debate, reluctantly acquiesced.

While they were discussing these matters, they heard t distant sound of horses' feet.

"Go," said Robin to Little John, "and invite yonc horseman to dinner."

Little John bounded away, and soon came before a you man, who was riding in a melancholy manner, with the bric hanging loose on the horse's neck, and his eyes drooping wards the ground.

"Whither go you?" said Little John.

"Whithersoever my horse pleases," said the young man.

"And that shall be," said Little John, "whither I plea to lead him. I am commissioned to invite you to dine wi my master."

"Who is your master?" said the young man.

"Robin Hood," said Little John.

"The bold outlaw?" said the stranger. "Neither he n you should have made me turn an inch aside yesterday ; b to-day I care not."

"Then it is better for you," said Little John, "that y came to-day than yesterday, if you love dining in a who skin : for my master is the pink of courtesy : but if his gues prove stubborn, he bastes them and his venison togethe while the friar says mass before meat."

The young man made no answer, and scarcely seemed hear what Little John was saying, who therefore took tl

horse's bridle and led him to where Robin and his foresters were setting forth their dinner. Robin seated the young man next to Marian. Recovering a little from his stupor, he looked with much amazement at her, and the baron, and Robin, and the friar; listened to their conversation, and seemed much astonished to find himself in such holy and courtly company. Robin helped him largely to numble-pie and cygnet and pheasant, and the other dainties of his table; and the friar pledged him in ale and wine, and exhorted him to make good cheer. But the young man drank little, ate less, spake nothing, and every now and then sighed heavily.

When the repast was ended, "Now," said Robin, "you are at liberty to pursue your journey: but first be pleased to pay for your dinner."

"That would I gladly do, Robin," said the young man, "but all I have about me are five shillings and a ring. To the five shillings you shall be welcome, but for the ring I will fight while there is a drop of blood in my veins."

"Gallantly spoken," said Robin Hood. "A love-token, without doubt: but you must submit to our forest laws. Little John must search; and if he find no more than you say, not a penny will I touch; but if you have spoken false, the whole is forfeit to our fraternity."

"And with reason," said the friar; "for thereby is the truth maintained. The Abbot of Doubleflask swore there was no money in his valise, and Little John forthwith emptied it of four hundred pounds. Thus was the abbot's perjury but of one minute's duration; for though his speech was false in the utterance, yet was it no sooner uttered than it became true, and we should have been *participes criminis* to have suffered the holy abbot to depart in falsehood: whereas he came to us a false priest, and we sent him away a true man. Marry, we turned his cloak to further account, and thereby hangs a tale that may be either said or sung; for in truth I am minstrel here as well as chaplain; I pray for good success to our just and necessary warfare, and sing thanksgiving odes when our foresters bring in booty:

"Bold Robin has robed him in ghostly attire,
And forth he is gone like a holy friar,
Singing hey down, ho down, down, derry down!
And of two gray friars he soon was aware,
Regaling themselves with dainty fare,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

"'Good morrow, good brothers,' said bold Robin Hood,
'And what make you in the good greenwood,
Singing hey down, ho down, down, derry down!
Now give me, I pray you, wine and food;
For none can I find in the good greenwood,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.'

"'Good brother,' they said, 'we would give you full fain,
But we have no more than enough for twain,
Singing hey down, ho down, down, derry down!'
'Then give me some money,' said bold Robin Hood.
'For none can I find in the good greenwood,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.'

"'No money have we, good brother,' said they:
'Then,' said he, 'we three for money will pray:
Singing hey down, ho down, down, derry down!
And whatever shall come at the end of our prayer,
We three holy friars will piously share,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.'

"'We will not pray with thee, good brother, God wot:
For truly, good brother, thou pleasest us not,
Singing hey down, ho down, down, derry down!'
Then up they both started from Robin to run,
But down on their knees Robin pulled them each one,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

"The gray friars prayed with a doleful face,
But bold Robin prayed with a right merry grace,
Singing hey down, ho down, down, derry down!
And when they had prayed, their portmanteau he took
And from it a hundred good angels he shook,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

"'The saints,' said bold Robin, 'have hearkened our
And here's a good angel apiece for your share—
If more you would have, you must win ere you wear-
Singing hey down, ho down, down, derry down!'
Then he blew his good horn with a musical cheer,
And fifty green bowmen came trooping full near,
And away the gray friars they bounded like deer,
All on the fallen leaves so brown."

CHAPTER XIII.

What can a young lassie, what shall a young lassie,
What can a young lassie do wi' an auld man?—BURNS.

"HERE is but five shillings and a ring," said Little John, "and the young man has spoken true."

"Then," said Robin to the stranger, "if want of money be the cause of your melancholy, speak. Little John is my treasurer, and he shall disburse to you."

"It is, and it is not," said the stranger; "it is, because, had I not wanted money, I had never lost my love; it is not, because, now that I have lost her, money would come too late to regain her."

"In what way have you lost her?" said Robin: "let us clearly know that she is past regaining, before we give up our wishes to restore her to you."

"She is to be married this day," said the stranger, "and perhaps is married by this, to a rich old knight; and yesterday I knew it not."

"What is your name?" said Robin.

"Allen," said the stranger.

"And where is the marriage to take place, Allen?" said Robin.

"At Edwinstow church," said Allen, "by the Bishop of Nottingham."

"I know that bishop," said Robin; "he dined with me a month since, and paid three hundred pounds for his dinner. He has a good ear and loves music. The friar sang to him to some tune. Give me my harper's cloak, and I will play a part at this wedding."

"These are dangerous times, Robin," said Marian, "for playing pranks out of the forest."

"Fear not," said Robin; "Edwinstow lies not Nottingham-ward, and I will take my precautions."

Robin put on his harper's cloak, while Little John painted his eyebrows and cheeks, tipped his nose with red, and tied him on a comely beard. Marian confessed, that had she not been present at the metamorphosis, she should not have

known her own true Robin. Robin took his harp and went to the wedding.

Robin found the bishop and his train in the church porch, impatiently expecting the arrival of the bride and bridegroom. The clerk was observing to the bishop that the knight was somewhat gouty, and that the necessity of walking the last quarter of a mile from the road to the churchyard probably detained the lively bridegroom rather longer than had been calculated upon.

"Oh! by my fay," said the music-loving bishop, "here comes a harper in the nick of time, and now I care not how long they tarry. Ho! honest friend, are you come to play at the wedding?"

"I am come to play anywhere," answered Robin, "where I can get a cup of sack; for which I will sing the praise of the donor in lofty verse, and emblazon him with any virtue which he may wish to have the credit of possessing, without the trouble of practising."

"A most courtly harper," said the bishop; "I will fill thee with sack; I will make thee a walking butt of sack, if thou wilt delight my ears with thy melodies."

"That will I," said Robin; "in what branch of my art shall I exert my faculty? I am passing well in all, from the anthem to the glee, and from the dirge to the coranto."

"It would be idle," said the bishop, "to give thee sack for playing me anthems, seeing that I myself do receive sack for hearing them sung. Therefore, as the occasion is festive, thou shalt play me a coranto."

Robin struck up and played away merrily, the bishop all the while in great delight, noddling his head and beating time with his foot, till the bride and bridegroom appeared. The bridegroom was richly apparelled, and came slowly and painfully forward, hobbling and leering, and pursing up his mouth into a smile of resolute defiance to the gout, and of tender complacency towards his lady-love, who, shining like gold at the old knight's expense, followed slowly between her father and mother, her cheeks pale, her head drooping, her steps faltering, and her eyes reddened with tears.

Robin stopped his minstrelsy, and said to the bishop, "This seems to me an unfit match."

"What do you say, rascal?" said the old knight, hobbling up to him.

"I say," said Robin, "this seems to me an unfit match. What, in the devil's name, can you want with a young wife, who have one foot in flannels, and the other in the grave?"

"What is that to thee, sirrah varlet?" said the old knight; "stand away from the porch, or I will fracture thy sconce with my cane."

"I will not stand away from the porch," said Robin, "unless the bride bid me, and tell me that you are her own true love."

"Speak," said the bride's father, in a severe tone, and with a look of significant menace. The girl looked alternately at her father and Robin. She attempted to speak, but her voice failed in the effort, and she burst into tears.

"Here is lawful cause and just impediment," said Robin, "and I forbid the banns."

"Who are you, villain?" said the old knight, stamping his sound foot with rage.

"I am the Roman law," said Robin, "which says that there shall not be more than ten years between a man and his wife; and here are five times ten: and so says the law of nature."

"Honest harper," said the bishop, "you are somewhat over-officious here, and less courtly than I deemed you. If you love sack, forbear; for this course will never bring you a drop. As to your Roman law, and your law of nature, what right have they to say anything which the law of Holy Writ says not?"

"The law of Holy Writ does say it," said Robin; "I expound it so to say; and I will produce sixty commentators to establish my exposition."

And so saying, he produced a horn from beneath his cloak, and blew three blasts, and threescore bowmen in green came leaping from the bushes and trees; and young Allen was the first among them to give Robin his sword, while Friar Tuck and Little John marched up to the altar. Robin stripped the bishop and clerk of their robes, and put them on the friar and Little John; and Allen advanced to take the hand of the bride. Her cheeks grew red and her eyes grew bright, as she locked her hand in her lover's, and tripped lightly with him into the church.

"This marriage will not stand," said the bishop, "for they have not been thrice asked in church."

"We will ask them seven times," said Little John, "lest three should not suffice."

"And in the meantime," said Robin, "the knight and the bishop shall dance to my harping."

So Robin sat in the church porch and played away merrily, while his foresters formed a ring, in the centre of which the knight and bishop danced with exemplary alacrity; and if they relaxed their exertions, Scarlet gently touched them up with the point of an arrow.

The knight grimaced ruefully, and begged Robin to think of his gout.

"So I do," said Robin; "this is the true antipodagron: you shall dance the gout away, and be thankful to me while you live. I told you," he added to the bishop, "I would play at this wedding, but you did not tell me that you would dance at it. The next couple you marry, think of the Roman law."

The bishop was too much out of breath to reply; and now the young couple issued from church, and the bride having made a farewell obeisance to her parents, they departed together with the foresters, the parents storming, the attendants laughing, the bishop puffing and blowing, and the knight rubbing his gouty foot, and uttering doleful lamentations for the gold and jewels with which he had so unwittingly adorned and dowered the bride.

CHAPTER XIV.

As ye came from the Holy Land
Of blessed Walsinghame,
Oh met ye not with my true love,
As by the way ye came?—*Old Ballad.*

IN pursuance of the arrangement recorded in the twelfth chapter, the baron, Robin, and Marian disguised themselves as pilgrims returned from Palestine, and travelling from the sea-coast of Hampshire to their home in Northumberland. By dint of staff and cockle-shell, sandal and scrip, they proceeded in safety the greater part of the way

(for Robin had many sly inns and resting-places between Barnsdale and Sherwood), and were already on the borders of Yorkshire, when, one evening, they passed within view of a castle, where they saw a lady standing on a turret, and surveying the whole extent of the valley through which they were passing. A servant came running from the castle, and delivered a message to them from his lady, who was sick with expectation of news from her lord in the Holy Land, and entreated them to come to her, that she might question them concerning him. This was an awkward occurrence; but there was no pretence for refusal, and they followed the servant into the castle. The baron, who had been in Palestine in his youth, undertook to be spokesman on the occasion, and to relate his own adventures to the lady as having happened to the lord in question. This preparation enabled him to be so minute and circumstantial in his detail, and so coherent in his replies to her questions, that the lady fell implicitly into the delusion, and was delighted to find that her lord was alive and in health, and in high favour with the king, and performing prodigies of valour in the name of his lady, whose miniature he always wore in his bosom. The baron guessed at this circumstance from the customs of that age, and happened to be in the right.

"This miniature," added the baron, "I have had the felicity to see, and should have known you by it among a million." The baron was a little embarrassed by some questions of the lady concerning her lord's personal appearance; but Robin came to his aid, observing a picture suspended opposite to him on the wall, which he made a bold conjecture to be that of the lord in question; and making a calculation of the influences of time and war, which he weighed with a comparison of the lady's age, he gave a description of her lord sufficiently like the picture in its groundwork to be a true resemblance, and sufficiently differing from it in circumstances to be more an original than a copy. The lady was completely deceived, and entreated them to partake her hospitality for the night; but this they deemed it prudent to decline, and with many humble thanks for her kindness, and representations of the necessity of not delaying their homeward course, they proceeded on their way.

As they passed over the drawbridge, they met Sir Ralph Montfaucon and his squire, who were wandering in quest of

Marian, and were entering to claim that hospitality which the pilgrims had declined. Their countenances struck Sir Ralph with a kind of imperfect recognition, which would never have been matured, but that the eyes of Marian, as she passed him, encountered his, and the images of those stars of beauty continued involuntarily twinkling in his sensorium to the exclusion of all other ideas, till memory, love, and hope concurred with imagination to furnish a probable reason for their haunting him so pertinaciously. Those eyes, he thought, were certainly the eyes of Matilda Fitzwater; and if the eyes were hers, it was extremely probable, if not logically consecutive, that the rest of the body they belonged to was hers also. Now, if it were really Matilda Fitzwater, who were her two companions? The baron? Ay, and the elder pilgrim was something like him. And the Earl of Huntingdon? Very probably. The earl and the baron might be good friends again, now that they were both in disgrace together. While he was revolving these cogitations, he was introduced to the lady, and after claiming and receiving the promise of hospi tality, he inquired what she knew of the pilgrims who had jus departed. The lady told him they were newly returned fro Palestine, having been long in the Holy Land. The knigh expressed some scepticism on this point. The lady replie that they had given her so minute a detail of her lord's pr ceedings, and so accurate a description of his person, that s could not be deceived in them. This staggered the knigh confidence in his own penetration; and if it had not bee heresy in knighthood to suppose for a moment that th could be *in rerum naturâ* such another pair of eyes as t of his mistress, he would have acquiesced implicitly in lady's judgment. But, while the lady and the knight conversing, the warder blew his bugle-horn, and pres entered a confidential messenger from Palestine, who her to understand that her lord was well; but entered i detail of his adventures most completely at variance wit baron's narrative, to which not the correspondence of a incident gave the remotest colouring of similarity. I became manifest that the pilgrims were not true mer Sir Ralph Montfaucon sate down to supper with hi full of cogitations, which we shall leave him to ch digest with his pheasant and canary.

Meanwhile our three pilgrims proceeded on the

The evening set in black and lowering, when Robin turned aside from the main track, to seek an asylum for the night, along a narrow way that led between rocky and woody hills. A peasant observed the pilgrims as they entered that narrow pass, and called after them: "Whither go you, my masters? there are rogues in that direction."

"Can you show us a direction," said Robin, "in which there are none? If so, we will take it in preference." The peasant grinned, and walked away whistling.

The pass widened as they advanced, and the woods grew thicker and darker around them. Their path wound along the slope of a woody declivity, which rose high above them in a thick rampart of foliage, and descended almost precipitously to the bed of a small river, which they heard dashing in its rocky channel, and saw its white foam gleaming at intervals in the last faint glimmerings of twilight. In a short time all was dark, and the rising voice of the wind foretold a coming storm. They turned a point of the valley, and saw a light below them in the depth of the hollow, shining through a cottage-casement and dancing in its reflection on the restless stream. Robin blew his horn, which was answered from below. The cottage door opened: a boy came forth with a torch, ascended the steep, showed tokens of great delight at meeting with Robin, and lighted them down a flight of steps rudely cut in the rock, and over a series of rugged stepping-stones, that crossed the channel of the river. They entered the cottage, which exhibited neatness, comfort, and plenty, being amply enriched with pots, pans, and pipkins, and adorned with flitches of bacon and sundry similar ornaments, that gave goodly promise in the fire-light that gleamed upon the rafters. A woman, who seemed just old enough to be the boy's mother, had thrown down her spinning-wheel in her joy at the sound of Robin's horn, and was bustling with singular alacrity to set forth her festal ware and prepare an abundant supper. Her features, though not beautiful, were agreeable and expressive, and were now lighted up with such manifest joy at the sight of Robin, that Marian could not help feeling a momentary touch of jealousy, and a half-formed suspicion that Robin had broken his forest law, and had occasionally gone out of bounds, as other great men have done upon occasion, in order to reconcile the breach of the spirit, with the preservation of the letter, of their own

ıslation. However, this suspicion, if it could be said to ıst in a mind so generous as Marian's, was very soon dis- pated by the entrance of the woman's husband, who testified much joy as his wife had done at the sight of Robin; and n a short time the whole of the party were amicably seated round a smoking supper of river-fish and wild wood fowl, on which the baron fell with as much alacrity as if he had been a true pilgrim from Palestine.

The husband produced some recondite flasks of wine, which were laid by in a bin consecrated to Robin, whose occasional visits to them in his wanderings were the festal days of these warm-hearted cottagers, whose manners showed that they had not been born to this low estate. Their story had no mystery, and Marian easily collected it from the tenor of their con- versation. The young man had been, like Robin, the victim of an usurious abbot, and had been outlawed for debt, and his nut-brown maid had accompanied him to the depths of Sherwood, where they lived an unholy and illegitimate life, killing the king's deer, and never hearing mass. In this state, Robin, then Earl of Huntingdon, discovered them in one of his huntings, and gave them aid and protection. When Robin himself became an outlaw, the necessary qualification or gift of continency was too hard a law for our lovers to subscribe to; and as they were thus disqualified for foresters, Robin had found them a retreat in this romantic and secluded spot. He had done similar service to other lovers similarly circumstanced, and had disposed them in various wild scenes which he and his men had discovered in their flittings from place to place, supplying them with all necessaries and com- forts from the reluctant disgorgings of fat abbots and usurers. The benefit was in some measure mutual; for these cottages served him as resting-places in his removals, and enabled him to travel untraced and unmolested; and in the delight with which he was always received he found himself even more welcome than he would have been at an inn; and this is saying very much for gratitude and affection together. The smiles which surrounded him were of his own creation, and he participated in the happiness he had bestowed.

The casements began to rattle in the wind, and the rain to beat upon the windows. The wind swelled to a hurricane, and the rain dashed like a flood against the glass. The boy ıimed to his little bed, the wife trimmed the lamp, th

husband heaped logs upon the fire: Robin broached another flask; and Marian filled the baron's cup, and sweetened Robin's by touching its edge with her lips.

"Well," said the baron, "give me a roof over my head, be it never so humble. Your greenwood canopy is pretty and pleasant in sunshine; but if I were doomed to live under it, I should wish it were water-tight."

"But," said Robin, "we have tents and caves for foul weather, good store of wine and venison, and fuel in abundance."

"Ay, but," said the baron, "I like to pull off my boots of a night, which you foresters seldom do, and to ensconce myself thereafter in a comfortable bed. Your beech root is over-hard for a couch, and your mossy stump is somewhat rough for a bolster."

"Had you not dry leaves," said Robin, "with a bishop's surplice over them? What would you have softer? And had you not an abbot's travelling cloak for a coverlet? What would you have warmer?"

"Very true," said the baron, "but that was an indulgence to a guest, and I dreamed all night of the Sheriff of Nottingham. I like to feel myself safe," he added, stretching out his legs to the fire, and throwing himself back in his chair with the air of a man determined to be comfortable. "I like to feel myself safe," said the baron.

At that moment the woman caught her husband's arm, and all the party following the direction of her eyes, looked simultaneously to the window, where they had just time to catch a glimpse of an apparition of an armed head, with its plumage tossing in the storm, on which the light shone from within, and which disappeared immediately.

CHAPTER XV.

O knight, thou lack'st a cup of canary. When did I see thee so put down? *Twelfth Night.*

SEVERAL knocks, as from the knuckles of an iron glove, were given at the door of the cottage, and a voice was heard entreating shelter from the storm for a traveller who had lost his way. Robin rose and went to the door.

"What are you?" said Robin.

"A soldier," replied the voice: "an unfortunate adherent of Longchamp, flying the vengeance of Prince John."

"Are you alone?" said Robin.

"Yes," said the voice: "it is a dreadful night. Hospitable cottagers, pray give me admittance. I would not have asked it but for the storm. I would have kept my watch in the woods."

"That I believe," said Robin. "You did not reckon on the storm when you turned into this pass. Do you know there are rogues this way?"

"I do," said the voice.

"So do I," said Robin.

A pause ensued, during which Robin listening attentively caught a faint sound of whispering.

"You are not alone," said Robin. "Who are your companions?"

"None but the wind and the water," said the voice, "and I would I had them not."

"The wind and the water have many voices," said Robin, "but I never before heard them say, What shall we do?"

Another pause ensued: after which,

"Look ye, master cottager," said the voice, in an altered tone, "if you do not let us in willingly, we will break down the door."

"Ho! ho!" roared the baron, "you are become plural are you, rascals? How many are there of you, thieves? What, I warrant you thought to rob and murder a poor harmless cottager and his wife, and did not dream of a garrison? You looked for no weapon of opposition but spit, poker, and basting-ladle, wielded by unskilful hands: but, rascals, here is short sword and long cudgel in hands well tried in war,

wherewith you shall be drilled into cullenders and beaten into mummy."

No reply was made, but furious strokes from without resounded upon the door. Robin, Marian, and the baron threw by their pilgrim's attire, and stood in arms on the defensive. They were provided with swords, and the cottager gave them bucklers and helmets, for all Robin's haunts were furnished with secret armouries. But they kept their swords sheathed, and the baron wielded a ponderous spear, which he pointed towards the door ready to run through the first that should enter, and Robin and Marian each held a bow with the arrow drawn to its head and pointed in the same direction. The cottager flourished a strong cudgel (a weapon in the use of which he prided himself on being particularly expert), and the wife seized the spit from the fire-place, and held it as she saw the baron hold his spear. The storm of wind and rain continued to beat on the roof and casement, and the storm of blows to resound upon the door, which at length gave way with a violent crash, and a cluster of armed men appeared without, seemingly not less than twelve. Behind them rolled the stream, now changed from a gentle and shallow river to a mighty and impetuous torrent, roaring in waves of yellow foam, partially reddened by the light that streamed through the open door, and turning up its convulsed surface in flashes of shifting radiance from restless masses of half-visible shadow. The stepping-stones, by which the intruders must have crossed, were buried under the waters. On the opposite bank the light fell on the stems and boughs of the rock-rooted oak and ash tossing and swaying in the blast, and sweeping the flashing spray with their leaves.

The instant the door broke, Robin and Marian loosed their arrows. Robin's arrow struck one of the assailants in the juncture of the shoulder, and disabled his right arm: Marian's struck a second in the juncture of the knee, and rendered him unserviceable for the night. The baron's long spear struck on the mailed breastplate of a third, and being stretched to its full extent by the long-armed hero, drove him to the edge of the torrent, and plunged him into its eddies, along which he was whirled down the darkness of the descending stream, calling vainly on his comrades for aid, till his voice was lost in the mingled roar of the waters and the wind. A fourth

springing through the door was laid prostrate by the cottager's cudgel: but the wife being less dexterous than her company, though an Amazon in strength, missed her pass at a fifth, and drove the point of the spit several inches into the right hand doorpost as she stood close to the left, and thus made a new barrier which the invaders could not pass without dipping under it and submitting their necks to the sword: but one of the assailants seizing it with gigantic rage, shook it at once from the grasp of its holder and from its lodgment in the post, and at the same time made good the irruption of the rest of his party into the cottage.

Now raged an unequal combat, for the assailants fell two to one on Robin, Marian, the baron, and the cottager; while the wife, being deprived of her spit, converted everything that was at hand to a missile, and rained pots, pans, and pipkins on the armed heads of the enemy. The baron raged like a tiger, and the cottager laid about him like a thresher. One of the soldiers struck Robin's sword from his hand and brought him on his knee, when the boy, who had been roused by the tumult and had been peeping through the inner door, leaped forward in his shirt, picked up the sword and replaced it in Robin's hand, who instantly springing up, disarmed and wounded one of his antagonists, while the other was laid prostrate under the dint of a brass cauldron launched by the Amazonian dame. Robin now turned to the aid of Marian, who was parrying most dexterously the cuts and slashes of her two assailants, of whom Robin delivered her from one, while a well-applied blow of her sword struck off the helmet of the other, who fell on his knees to beg a boon, and she recognized Sir Ralph Montfaucon. The men who were engaged with the baron and the peasant, seeing their leader subdued, immediately laid down their arms and cried for quarter. The wife brought some strong rope, and the baron tied their arms behind them.

"Now, Sir Ralph," said Marian, "once more you are at my mercy."

"That I always am, cruel beauty," said the discomfited lover.

"Odso! courteous knight," said the baron, "is this the return you make for my beef and canary, when you kissed my daughter's hand in token of contrition for your intermeddling at her wedding? Heart, I am glad to see she has

given you a bloody cockscomb. Slice him down, Mawd! slice him down, and fling him into the river."

"Confess," said Marian, "what brought you here, and how did you trace our steps?"

"I will confess nothing," said the knight.

"Then confess, you rascal," said the baron, holding his sword to the throat of the captive squire.

"Take away the sword," said the squire, "it is too near my mouth, and my voice will not come out for fear: take away the sword, and I will confess all." The baron dropped his sword, and the squire proceeded: "Sir Ralph met you, as you quitted Lady Falkland's castle, and by representing to her who you were, borrowed from her such a number of her retainers as he deemed must ensure your capture, seeing that your familiar the friar was not at your elbow. We set forth without delay, and traced you first by means of a peasant who saw you turn into this valley, and afterwards by the light from the casement of this solitary dwelling. Our design was to have laid an ambush for you in the morning, but the storm and your observation of my unlucky face through the casement made us change our purpose; and what followed you can tell better than I can, being indeed masters of the subject."

"You are a merry knave," said the baron, "and here is a cup of wine for you."

"Gramercy," said the squire, "and better late than never: but I lacked a cup of this before. Had I been pot-valiant, I had held you play."

"Sir knight," said Marian, "this is the third time you have sought the life of my lord and of me, for mine is interwoven with his. And do you think me so spiritless as to believe that I can be yours by compulsion? Tempt me not again, for the next time shall be the last, and the fish of the nearest river shall commute the flesh of a recreant knight into the fast-day dinner of an uncarnivorous friar. I spare you now, not in pity but in scorn. Yet shall you swear to a convention never more to pursue or molest my lord or me, and on this condition you shall live."

The knight had no alternative but to comply, and swore, on the honour of knighthood, to keep the convention inviolate. How well he kept his oath we shall have no opportunity of narrating: *Di lui la nostra istoria più non parla.*

CHAPTER XVI.

Carry me over the water, thou fine fellôwe.—*Old Ballad.*

THE pilgrims, without experiencing further molestation, arrived at the retreat of Sir Guy of Gamwell. They found the old knight a cup too low; partly from being cut off from the scenes of his old hospitality and the shouts of his Nottinghamshire vassals, who were wont to make the rafters of his ancient hall re-echo to their revelry; but principally from being parted from his son, who had long been the better half of his flask and pasty. The arrival of our visitors cheered him up; and finding that the baron was to remain with him, he testified his delight and the cordiality of his welcome by pegging him in the ribs till he made him roar.

Robin and Marian took an affectionate leave of the baron and the old knight; and before they quitted the vicinity of Barnsdale, deeming it prudent to return in a different disguise, they laid aside their pilgrim's attire, and assumed the habits and appurtenances of wandering minstrels.

They travelled in this character safely and pleasantly, till one evening at a late hour they arrived by the side of a river, where Robin looking out for a mode of passage perceived a ferry-boat safely moored in a nook on the opposite bank, near which a chimney sending up a wreath of smoke through the thick-set willows, was the only symptom of human habitation; and Robin naturally conceiving the said chimney and wreath of smoke to be the outward signs of the inward ferryman, shouted "Over!" with much strength and clearness; but no voice replied, and no ferry-man appeared. Robin raised his voice, and shouted with redoubled energy, "Over, Over, O-o-o-over!" A faint echo alone responded "Over!" and again died away into deep silence: but after a brief interval a voice from among the willows, in a strange kind of mingled intonation that was half a shout and half a song, answered:

"Over, over, over, jolly, jolly, rover,
Would you then come over? Over, over, over?
Jolly, jolly rover, here's one lives in clover:
Who finds the clover? The jolly, jolly rover.
He finds the clover, let him then come over,
The jolly, jolly rover, over, over, over."

"I much doubt," said Marian, "if this ferryman do not mean by clover something more than the toll of his ferry-boat."

"I doubt not," answered Robin, "he is a levier of toll and tithe, which I shall put him upon proof of his right to receive, by making trial of his might to enforce."

The ferryman emerged from the willows and stepped into his boat. "As I live," exclaimed Robin, "the ferryman is a friar."

"With a sword," said Marian, "stuck in his rope girdle."

The friar pushed his boat off manfully, and was presently half over the river.

"It is friar Tuck," said Marian.

"He will scarcely know us," said Robin; "and if he do not, I will break a staff with him for sport."

The friar came singing across the water: the boat touched the land: Robin and Marian stepped on board: the friar pushed off again.

"Silken doublets, silken doublets," said the friar: "slenderly lined, I trow: your wandering minstrel is always poor toll: your sweet angels of voices pass current for a bed and a supper at the house of every lord that likes to hear the fame of his valour without the trouble of fighting for it. What need you of purse or pouch? You may sing before thieves. Pedlars, pedlars: wandering from door to door with the small ware of lies and cajolery: exploits for carpet-knights; honesty for courtiers; truth for monks, and chastity for nuns: a good saleable stock that costs the vender nothing, defies wear and tear, and when it has served a hundred customers is as plentiful and as marketable as ever. But, sirrahs, I'll none of your balderdash. You pass not hence without clink of brass, or I'll knock your musical noddles together till they ring like a pair of cymbals. That will be a new tune for your minstrelships."

This friendly speech of the friar ended as they stepped on the opposite bank. Robin had noticed as they passed that the summer stream was low.

"Why, thou brawling mongrel," said Robin, "that whether thou be thief, friar, or ferryman, or an ill-mixed compound of all three, passes conjecture, though I judge thee to be simple thief, what barkest thou at thus? Villain, there is clink of brass for thee. Dost thou see this coin? Dost thou

hear this music? Look and listen: for touch thou shalt not: my minstrelship defies thee. Thou shalt carry me on thy back over the water, and receive nothing but a cracked sconce for thy trouble."

"A bargain," said the friar: "for the water is low, the labour is light, and the reward is alluring." And he stooped down for Robin, who mounted his back, and the friar waded with him over the river.

"Now, fine fellow," said the friar, "thou shalt carry me back over the water, and thou shalt have a cracked sconce for thy trouble."

Robin took the friar on his back, and waded with him into the middle of the river, when by a dexterous jerk he suddenly flung him off and plunged him horizontally over head and ears in the water. Robin waded to shore, and the friar, half swimming and half scrambling, followed.

"Fine fellow, fine fellow," said the friar, "now will I pay thee thy cracked sconce."

"Not so," said Robin, "I have not earned it: but thou hast earned it, and shalt have it."

It was not, even in those good old times, a sight of every day to see a troubadour and a friar playing at single-stick by the side of a river, each aiming with fell intent at the other's cockscomb. The parties were both so skilled in attack and defence, that their mutual efforts for a long time expended themselves in quick and loud rappings on each other's oaken staves. At length Robin by a dexterous feint contrived to score one on the friar's crown: but in the careless moment of triumph a splendid sweep of the friar's staff struck Robin's out of his hand into the middle of the river, and repaid his crack on the head with a degree of vigour that might have passed the bounds of a jest if Marian had not retarded its descent by catching the friar's arm.

"How now, recreant friar," said Marian; "what have you to say why you should not suffer instant execution, being detected in open rebellion against your liege lord? Therefore kneel down, traitor, and submit your neck to the sword of the offended law."

"Benefit of clergy," said the friar: "I plead my clergy. And is it you indeed, ye scapegraces? Ye are well disguised: I knew ye not, by my flask. Robin, jolly Robin, he buys a jest dearly that pays for it with a bloody cockscomb. But here

is balm for all bruises, outward and inward." The friar produced a flask of canary.) "Wash thy wound twice and thy throat thrice with this solar composition, and then shalt marvel where was thy hurt. But what marvel ye to see this fraud? Knew ye not that ye could not appear in a mask more fashioned to move my bile than in that of these gilders and lackerers of the smooth surface of worthlessness, that bring the gold of true valour into disrepute, by stamping the baser metal with the fairer impression? I marvelled to find any such given to fighting (for they have an ill instinct of self-preservation): but I rejoiced thereat, that I might discuss to them poetical justice: and therefore have I cracked thy sconce: for which, let this be thy medicine."

"But wherefore," said Marian, "do we find you here, when we left you joint lord warden of Sherwood?"

"I do but retire to my devotions," replied the friar. "This is my hermitage, in which I first took refuge when I escaped from my beloved brethren of Rubygill; and to which I still retreat at times from the vanities of the world, which else might cling to me too closely, since I have been promoted to be peer-spiritual of your forest-court. For, indeed, I do find in myself certain indications and admonitions that my day has past its noon; and none more cogent than this: that daily of bad wine I grow more intolerant, and of good wine have a keener and more fastidious relish. There is no surer symptom of receding years. The ferryman is my faithful varlet. I send him on some pious errand, that I may meditate in ghostly privacy, when my presence in the forest can best be spared: and when can it be better spared than now, seeing that the neighbourhood of Prince John, and his incessant perquisitions for Marian, have made the forest too hot to hold more of us than are needful to keep up a quorum, and preserve unbroken the continuity of our forest-dominion? For, in truth, without your greenwood majesties, we have hardly the wit to live in a body, and at the same time to keep our necks out of jeopardy, while that arch-rebel and traitor John infests the precincts of our territory."

The friar now conducted them to his peaceful cell, where he spread his frugal board with fish, venison, wild-fowl, fruit, and canary. Under the compound operation of this *materia medica* Robin's wounds healed apace, and the friar, who hated minstrelsy, began as usual chirping in his cups. Robin and

Marian chimed in with his tuneful humour till the midnight moon peeped in upon their revelry.

It was now the very witching time of night, when they heard a voice shouting, "Over!" They paused to listen, and the voice repeated "Over!" in accents clear and loud, but which at the same time either were in themselves, or seemed to be, from the place and the hour, singularly plaintive and dreary. The friar fidgetted about in his seat: fell into a deep musing: shook himself, and looked about him: first at Marian, then at Robin, then at Marian again; filled and tossed off a cup of canary, and relapsed into his reverie.

"Will you not bring your passenger over?" said Robin. The friar shook his head and looked mysterious.

"That passenger," said the friar, "will never come over. Every full moon, at midnight, that voice calls, 'Over!' I and my varlet have more than once obeyed the summons, and we have sometimes had a glimpse of a white figure under the opposite trees: but when the boat has touched the bank, nothing has been to be seen; and the voice has been heard no more till the midnight of the next full moon."

"It is very strange," said Robin.

"Wondrous strange," said the friar, looking solemn.

The voice again called "Over!" in a long plaintive musical cry.

"I must go to it," said the friar, "or it will give us no peace. I would all my customers were of this world. I begin to think that I am Charon, and that this river is Styx."

"I will go with you, friar," said Robin.

"By my flask," said the friar, "but you shall not."

"Then I will," said Marian.

"Still less," said the friar, hurrying out of the cell. Robin and Marian followed: but the friar outstepped them, and pushed off his boat.

A white figure was visible under the shade of the opposite trees. The boat approached the shore, and the figure glided away. The friar returned.

They re-entered the cottage, and sat some time conversing on the phenomenon they had seen. The friar sipped his wine, and after a time, said:

"There is a tradition of a damsel who was drowned here some years ago. The tradition is——"

But the friar could not narrate a plain tale: he therefore cleared his throat, and sang with due solemnity, in a ghostly voice:

"A damsel came in midnight rain,
And called across the ferry:
The weary wight she called in vain,
Whose senses sleep did bury.
At evening from her father's door
She turned to meet her lover:
At midnight, on the lonely shore.
She shouted, 'Over, over!'

"She had not met him by the tree
Of their accustomed meeting,
And sad and sick at heart was she,
Her heart all wildly beating.
In chill suspense the hours went by,
The wild storm burst above her:
She turned her to the river nigh,
And shouted, 'Over, over!'

"A dim, discoloured, doubtful light
The moon's dark veil permitted,
And thick before her troubled sight
Fantastic shadows flitted.
Her lover's form appeared to glide,
And beckon o'er the water:
Alas! his blood that morn had dyed
Her brother's sword with slaughter.

"Upon a little rock she stood,
To make her invocation:
She marked not that the rain-swoll'n flood
Was islanding her station.
The tempest mocked her feeble cry:
No saint his aid would give her:
The flood swelled high and yet more high,
And swept her down the river.

"Yet oft beneath the pale moonlight,
When hollow winds are blowing.
The shadow of that maiden bright
Glides by the dark stream's flowing.
And when the storms of midnight rave,
While clouds the broad moon cover,
The wild gusts waft across the wave
The cry of, 'Over, over!'"

While the friar was singing, Marian was meditating: and when he had ended she said, "Honest friar, you have misplaced your tradition, which belongs to the æstuary of a nobler

river, where the damsel was swept away by the rising of the tide, for which your land-flood is an indifferent substitute. But the true tradition of this stream I think I myself possess, and I will narrate it in your own way:

"It was a friar of orders free,
A friar of Rubygill:
At the greenwood-tree a vow made he,
But he kept it very ill:
A vow made he of chastity,
But he kept it very ill.
He kept it, perchance, in the conscious shade
Of the bounds of the forest wherein it was made:
But he roamed where he listed, as free as the wind,
And he left his good vow in the forest behind:
For its woods out of sight were his vow out of mind,
With the friar of Rubygill.

"In lonely hut himself he shut,
The friar of Rubygill;
Where the ghostly elf absolved himself,
To follow his own good will:
And he had no lack of canary sack,
To keep his conscience still.
And a damsel well knew, when at lonely midnight
It gleamed on the waters, his signal-lamp-light:
'Over! over!' she warbled with nightingale throat,
And the friar sprung forth at the magical note,
And she crossed the dark stream in his trim ferry-boat,
With the friar of Rubygill.

"Look you now," said Robin, "if the friar does not blush. Many strange sights have I seen in my day, but never till this moment did I see a blushing friar."

"I think," said the friar, "you never saw one that blushed not, or you saw good canary thrown away. But you are welcome to laugh if it so please you. None shall laugh in my company, though it be at my expense, but I will have my share of the merriment. The world is a stage, and life is a farce, and he that laughs most has most profit of the performance. The worst thing is good enough to be laughed at, though it be good for nothing else; and the best thing, though it be good for something else, is good for nothing better."

And he struck up a song in praise of laughing and quaffing, without further adverting to Marian's insinuated accusation; being, perhaps, of opinion, that it was a subject on which the least said would be the soonest mended.

So passed the night. In the morning a forester came to the friar, with intelligence that Prince John had been compelled, by the urgency of his affairs in other quarters, to disembarrass Nottingham Castle of his royal presence. Our wanderers returned joyfully to their forest-dominion, being thus relieved from the vicinity of any more formidable belligerent than their old bruised and beaten enemy the Sheriff of Nottingham.

CHAPTER XVII.

Oh! this life
Is nobler than attending for a check,
Richer than doing nothing for a bribe,
Prouder than rustling in unpaid for silk.—*Cymbeline.*

SO Robin and Marian dwelt and reigned in the forest, ranging the glades and the greenwoods from the matins of the lark to the vespers of the nightingale, and administering natural justice according to Robin's ideas of rectifying the inequalities of human condition: raising genial dews from the bags of the rich and idle, and returning them in fertilizing showers on the poor and industrious: an operation which more enlightened statesmen have happily reversed, to the unspeakable benefit of the community at large. The light footsteps of Marian were impressed on the morning dew beside the firmer step of her lover, and they shook its large drops about them as they cleared themselves a passage through the thick tall fern, without any fear of catching cold, which was not much in fashion in the twelfth century. Robin was as hospitable as Cathmor; for seven men stood on seven paths to call the stranger to his feast. It is true, he superadded the small improvement of making the stranger pay for it: than which what could be more generous? For Cathmor was himself the prime giver of his feast, whereas Robin was only the agent to a series of strangers, who provided in turn for the entertainment of their successors; which is carrying the disinterestedness of hospitality to its acme. Marian often killed the deer,

Which Scarlet dressed, and Friar Tuck blessed,
While Little John wandered in search of a guest.

Robin was very devout, though there was great unity in his religion: it was exclusively given to our Lady the Virgin, and he never set forth in a morning till he had said three prayers, and had heard the sweet voice of his Marian singing a hymn to their mutual patroness. Each of his men had, as usual, a patron saint according to his name or taste. The friar chose a saint for himself, and fixed on Saint Botolph, whom he euphonized into Saint Bottle, and maintained that he was that very Panomphic Pantagruelian saint, well known in ancient France as a female divinity, by the name of La Dive Bouteille, whose oracular monosyllable "Trincq," is celebrated and understood by all nations, and is expounded by the learned doctor Alcofribas,* who has treated at large on the subject, to signify "drink." Saint Bottle, then, was the saint of Friar Tuck, who did not yield even to Robin and Marian in the assiduity of his devotions to his chosen patron. Such was their summer life, and in their winter caves they had sufficient furniture, ample provender, store of old wine, and assuredly no lack of fuel, with joyous music and pleasant discourse to charm away the season of darkness and storms.

Many moons had waxed and waned, when on the afternoon of a lovely summer day a lusty broad-boned knight was riding through the forest of Sherwood. The sun shone brilliantly on the full green foliage, and afforded the knight a fine opportunity of observing picturesque effects, of which it is to be feared he did not avail himself. But he had not proceeded far, before he had an opportunity of observing something much more interesting, namely, a fine young outlaw leaning, in the true Sherwood fashion, with his back against a tree. The knight was preparing to ask the stranger a question, the answer to which, if correctly given, would have relieved him from a doubt that pressed heavily on his mind, as to whether he was in the right road or the wrong, when the youth prevented the inquiry by saying: "In God's name, sir knight, you are late to your meals. My master has tarried dinner for you these three hours."

* Alcofribas Nasier: an anagram of François Rabelais, and his assumed appellation. The reader who desires to know more about this oracular divinity, may consult the said doctor Alcofribas Nasier, who will usher him into the adytum through the medium of the high priestess Bacbuc.

"I doubt," said the knight, "I am not he you wot of. I am nowhere bidden to-day, and I know none in this vicinage."

"We feared," said the youth, "your memory would be treacherous: therefore I am stationed here to refresh it."

"Who is your master?" said the knight; "and where does he abide?"

"My master," said the youth," is called Robin Hood, and he abides hard by."

"And what knows he of me?" said the knight.

"He knows you," answered the youth, "as he does every wayfaring knight and friar, by instinct."

"Gramercy," said the knight; "then I understand his bidding: but how if I say I will not come?"

"I am enjoined to bring you," said the youth. "If persuasion avail not, I must use other argument."

"Say'st thou so?" said the knight; "I doubt if thy stripling rhetoric would convince me."

"That," said the young forester, "we will see."

"We are not equally matched, boy," said the knight. "I should get less honour by thy conquest, than grief by thy injury."

"Perhaps," said the youth, "my strength is more than my seeming, and my cunning more than my strength. Therefore let it please your knighthood to dismount."

"It shall please my knighthood to chastise thy presumption," said the knight, springing from his saddle.

Hereupon, which in those days was usually the result of a meeting between any two persons anywhere, they proceeded to fight.

The knight had in an uncommon degree both strength and skill: the forester had less strength, but not less skill than the knight, and showed such a mastery of his weapon as reduced the latter to great admiration.

They had not fought many minutes by the forest clock, the sun; and had as yet done each other no worse injury than that the knight had wounded the forester's jerkin, and the forester had disabled the knight's plume; when they were interrupted by a voice from a thicket, exclaiming, "Well fought, girl: well fought. Mass, that had nigh been a shrewd hit. Thou owest him for that, lass. Marry, stand by, I'll pay him for thee."

The knight turning to the voice, beheld a tall friar issuing from the thicket, brandishing a ponderous cudgel.

"Who art thou?" said the knight.

"I am the church militant of Sherwood," answered the friar. "Why art thou in arms against our lady queen?"

"What meanest thou?" said the knight.

"Truly this," said the friar, "is our liege lady of the forest, against whom I do apprehend thee in overt act of treason. What sayest thou for thyself?"

"I say," answered the knight, "that if this be indeed a lady, man never yet held me so long."

"Spoken," said the friar, "like one who hath done execution. Hast thou thy stomach full of steel? Wilt thou diversify thy repast with a taste of my oak-graff? Or wilt thou incline thine heart to our venison, which truly is cooling? Wilt thou fight? or wilt thou dine? or wilt thou fight and dine? or wilt thou dine and fight? I am for thee, choose as thou mayest."

"I will dine," said the knight; "for with lady I never fought before, and with friar I never fought yet, and with neither will I ever fight knowingly: and if this be the queen of the forest, I will not, being in her own dominions, be backward to do her homage."

So saying, he kissed the hand of Marian, who was pleased most graciously to express her approbation.

"Gramercy, sir knight," said the friar, "I laud thee for thy courtesy, which I deem to be no less than thy valour. Now do thou follow me, while I follow my nose, which scents the pleasant odour of roast from the depth of the forest recesses. I will lead thy horse, and do thou lead my lady."

The knight took Marian's hand, and followed the friar, who walked before them, singing:

"When the wind blows, when the wind blows,
From where under buck the dry log glows,
What guide can you follow,
O'er brake and o'er hollow,
So true as a ghostly, ghostly nose?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

Robin and Richard were two pretty men.—*Mother Goose's Melody.*

THEY proceeded, following their infallible guide, first along a light elastic greensward under the shade of lofty and wide-spreading trees that skirted a sunny opening of the forest, then along labyrinthine paths, which the deer, the outlaw, or the woodman had made, through the close shoots of the young coppices, through the thick undergrowth of the ancient woods, through beds of gigantic fern that filled the narrow glades and waved their green feathery heads above the plume of the knight. Along these sylvan alleys they walked in single file; the friar singing and pioneering in the van, the horse plunging and floundering behind the friar, the lady following "in maiden meditation, fancy free," and the knight bringing up the rear, much marvelling at the strange company into which his stars had thrown him. Their path had expanded sufficiently to allow the knight to take Marian's hand again, when they arrived in the august presence of Robin Hood and his court.

Robin's table was spread under a high overarching canopy of living boughs, on the edge of a natural lawn of verdure starred with flowers, through which a swift transparent rivulet ran sparkling in the sun. The board was covered with abundance of choice food and excellent liquor, not without the comeliness of snow-white linen and the splendour of costly plate, which the Sheriff of Nottingham had unwillingly contributed to supply, at the same time with an excellent cook, whom Little John's art had spirited away to the forest with the contents of his master's silver scullery.

An hundred foresters were here assembled over-ready for their dinner, some seated at the table and some lying in groups under the trees.

Robin bade courteous welcome to the knight, who took his seat between Robin and Marian at the festal board; at which was already placed one strange guest in the person of a portly monk, sitting between Little John and Scarlet, with his rotund physiognomy elongated into an unnatural oval by the conjoint influence of sorrow and fear: sorrow for the departed contents of his travelling treasury, a good-looking

valise which was hanging empty on a bough; and fear for his personal safety, of which all the flasks and pasties before him could not give him assurance. The appearance of the knight, however, cheered him up with a semblance of protection, and gave him just sufficient courage to demolish a cygnet and a numble-pie, which he diluted with the contents of two flasks of canary sack.

But wine, which sometimes creates and often increases joy, doth also, upon occasion, heighten sorrow: and so it fared now with our portly monk, who had no sooner explained away his portion of provender, than he began to weep and bewail himself bitterly.

"Why dost thou weep, man?" said Robin Hood. "Thou hast done thine embassy justly, and shalt have thy Lady's grace."

"Alack! alack!" said the monk: "no embassy had I, luckless sinner, as well thou wottest, but to take to my abbey in safety the treasure whereof thou hast despoiled me."

"Propound me his case," said Friar Tuck, "and I will give him ghostly counsel."

"You well remember," said Robin Hood, "the sorrowful knight who dined with us here twelve months and a day gone by.

"Well do I," said Friar Tuck. "His lands were in jeopardy with a certain abbot, who would allow him no longer day for their redemption. Whereupon you lent to him the four hundred pounds which he needed, and which he was to repay this day, though he had no better security to give than our Lady the Virgin."

"I never desired better," said Robin, "for she never yet failed to send me my pay: and here is one of her own flock, this faithful and well-favoured monk of St. Mary's hath brought it me duly, principal and interest to a penny, as Little John can testify, who told it forth. To be sure, he denied having it, but that was to prove our faith. We sought and found it."

"I know nothing of your knight," said the monk: "and the money was our own, as the Virgin shall bless me."

"She shall bless thee," said Friar Tuck, "for a faithful messenger."

The monk resumed his walking. Little John brought him his horse. Robin gave him leave to depart. He sprung with

singular nimbleness into the saddle, and vanished without saying, God give you good day.

The stranger knight laughed heartily as the monk rode off.

"They say, sir knight," said Friar Tuck, "they should laugh who win: but thou laughest who art likely to lose."

"I have won," said the knight, "a good dinner, some mirth, and some knowledge: and I cannot lose by paying for them."

"Bravely said," answered Robin. "Still it becomes thee to pay: for it is not meet that a poor forester should treat a rich knight. How much money hast thou with thee?"

"Troth, I know not," said the knight. "Sometimes much, sometimes little, sometimes none. But search, and what thou findest, keep: and for the sake of thy kind heart and open hand, be it what it may, I shall wish it were more."

"Then, since thou sayest so," said Robin, "not a penny will I touch. Many a false churl comes hither, and disburses against his will: and till there is lack of these, I prey not on true men."

"Thou art thyself a true man, right well I judge, Robin," said the stranger knight, "and seemest more like one bred in court than to thy present outlaw life."

"Our life," said the friar, "is a craft, an art, and a mystery. How much of it, think you, could be learned at court?"

"Indeed, I cannot say," said the stranger knight: "but I should apprehend very little."

"And so should I," said the friar: "for we should find very little of our bold open practice, but should hear abundance of praise of our principles. To live in seeming fellowship and secret rivalry; to have a hand for all, and a heart for none; to be everybody's acquaintance, and nobody's friend; to meditate the ruin of all on whom we smile, and to dread the secret stratagems of all who smile on us; to pilfer honours and despoil fortunes, not by fighting in daylight, but by sapping in darkness: these are arts which the court can teach, but which we, by 'r Lady, have not learned. But let your court-minstrel tune up his throat to the praise of your court-hero, then come our principles into play: then is our practice extolled: not by the same name, for their Richard is a hero, and our Robin is a thief: marry, your hero guts an exchequer, while your thief disembowels a portmanteau; your hero sacks

a city, while your thief sacks a cellar: your hero marauds on a larger scale, and that is all the difference, for the principle and the virtue are one: but two of a trade cannot agree: therefore your hero makes laws to get rid of your thief, and gives him an ill name that he may hang him: for might is right, and the strong make laws for the weak, and they that make laws to serve their own turn do also make morals to give colour to their laws."

"Your comparison, friar," said the stranger, "fails in this: that your thief fights for profit, and your hero for honour. I have fought under the banners of Richard, and if, as you phrase it, he guts exchequers, and sacks cities, it is not to win treasure for himself, but to furnish forth the means of his greater and more glorious aim."

"Misconceive me not, sir knight," said the friar. "We all love and honour King Richard, and here is a deep draught to his health: but I would show you, that we foresters are miscalled by opprobrious names, and that our virtues, though they follow at humble distance, are yet truly akin to those of Cœur-de-Lion. I say not that Richard is a thief, but I say that Robin is a hero: and for honour, did ever yet man, miscalled thief, win greater honour than Robin? Do not all men grace him with some honourable epithet? The most gentle thief, the most courteous thief, the most bountiful thief, yea, and the most honest thief? Richard is courteous, bountiful, honest, and valiant: but so also is Robin: it is the false word that makes the unjust distinction. They are twin-spirits, and should be friends, but that fortune hath differently cast their lot: but their names shall descend together to the latest days, as the flower of their age and of England: for in the pure principles of freebootery have they excelled all men; and to the principles of freebootery, diversely developed, belong all the qualities to which song and story concede renown."

"And you may add, friar," said Marian, "that Robin, no less than Richard, is king in his own dominion; and that if his subjects be fewer, yet are they more uniformly loyal."

"I would, fair lady," said the stranger, "that thy observation were not so true. But I nothing doubt, Rob that if Richard could hear your friar, and see you and y as I now do, there is not a man in England whom the hand more cordially than yourself."

"Gramercy, sir knight," said Robin——But his speech was cut short by Little John calling, "Hark!"

All listened. A distant trampling of horses was heard. The sounds approached rapidly, and at length a group of horsemen glittering in holyday dresses was visible among the trees.

"God's my life!" said Robin, "what means this? To arms, my merry men all."

"No arms, Robin," said the foremost horseman, riding up and springing from his saddle: "have you forgotten Sir William of the Lee?"

"No, by my fay," said Robin; "and right welcome again to Sherwood."

Little John bustled to re-array the disorganized economy of the table, and replace the dilapidations of the provender.

"I come late, Robin," said Sir William, "but I came by a wrestling, where I found a good yeoman wrongfully beset by a crowd of sturdy varlets, and I stayed to do him right."

"I thank thee for that, in God's name," said Robin, "as if thy good service had been to myself."

"And here," said the knight, "is thy four hundred pound; and my men have brought thee an hundred bows and as many well-furnished quivers; which I beseech thee to receive and to use as a poor token of my grateful kindness to thee: for me and my wife and children didst thou redeem from beggary."

"Thy bows and arrows," said Robin, "will I joyfully receive: but of thy money, not a penny. It is paid already. My Lady, who was thy security, hath sent it me for thee."

Sir William pressed, but Robin was inflexible.

"It is paid," said Robin, "as this good knight can testify, who saw my Lady's messenger depart but now."

Sir William looked round to the stranger knight, and instantly fell on his knee, saying, "God save King Richard."

The foresters, friar and all, dropped on their knees together, and repeated in chorus: "God save King Richard."

"Rise, rise," said Richard, smiling: "Robin is king here, as his lady hath shown. I have heard much of thee, Robin, both of thy present and thy former state. And this, thy fair forest-queen, is, if tales say true, the lady Matilda Fitzwater."

Marian signed acknowledgment.

"Your father," said the king, "has approved his fidelity to me, by the loss of his lands, which the newness of my return, and many public cares, have not yet given me time to restore: but this justice shall be done to him, and to thee also, Robin, if thou wilt leave thy forest-life and resume thy earldom, and be a peer of Cœur-de-Lion: for braver heart and juster hand I never yet found."

Robin looked round on his men.

"Your followers," said the king, "shall have free pardon, and such of them as thou wilt part with shall have maintenance from me; and if ever I confess to priest, it shall be to thy friar."

"Gramercy to your majesty," said the friar; "and my inflictions shall be flasks of canary; and if the number be (as in grave cases I may, peradventure, make it) too great for one frail mortality, I will relieve you by vicarious penance, and pour down my own throat the redundancy of the burden."

Robin and his followers embraced the king's proposal. A joyful meeting soon followed with the baron and Sir Guy of Gamwell: and Richard himself honoured with his own presence a formal solemnization of the nuptials of our lovers, whom he constantly distinguished with his peculiar regard.

The friar could not say, Farewell to the forest, without something of a heavy heart: and he sang as he turned his back upon its bounds, occasionally reverting his head:

"Ye woods, that oft at sultry noon
Have o'er me spread your massy shade:
Ye gushing streams, whose murmured tune
Has in my ear sweet music made,
While, where the dancing pebbles show
Deep in the restless fountain-pool,
The gelid water's upward flow,
My second flask was laid to cool:

"Ye pleasant sights of leaf and flower:
Ye pleasant sounds of bird and bee:
Ye sports of deer in sylvan bower:
Ye feasts beneath the greenwood tree:
Ye baskings in the vernal sun:
Ye slumbers in the summer dell:
Ye trophies that this arm has won:
And must ye hear your friar's farewell?"

But the friar's farewell was not destined to be eternal. He was domiciled as the family confessor of the Earl and Countess

of Huntingdon, who led a discreet and courtly life, and kept up old hospitality in all its munificence, till the death of King Richard and the usurpation of John, by placing their enemy in power, compelled them to return to their greenwood sovereignty; which, it is probable, they would have before done from choice, if their love of sylvan liberty had not been counteracted by their desire to retain the friendship of Cour-de-Lion. Their old and tried adherents, the friar among the foremost, flocked again round their forest-banner; and in merry Sherwood they long lived together, the lady still retaining her former name of Maid Marian, though the appellation was then as much a misnomer as that of Little John.

END OF MAID MARIAN.

THE MISFORTUNES OF ELPHIN.

Unlooked-for good betides us still,
And unanticipated ill:
Blind Fortune rules the hours that roll:
Then fill with good old wine the bowl.

Quod non exspectes ex transverso fit,
Et suprà nos Fortuna negotia curat:
Quare da nobis vina Falerna, puer.
PETRONIUS ARBITER.

[First published in 1829.]

Elphin and Teithrin stood some time on the floor of the hall before they attracted the attention of Seithenyn, who, during the chorus, was flourishing his golden goblet. The chorus had scarcely ended when he noticed them, and immediately roared aloud, "You are welcome all four."

Elphin answered, "We thank you: we are but two."

"Two or four," said Seithenyn, "all is one. You are welcome all. When a stranger enters, the custom in other places is to begin by washing his feet. My custom is, to begin by washing his throat. Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi bids you welcome."

Elphin, taking the wine-cup, answered, "Elphin ap Gwythno Garanhir thanks you."

Seithenyn started up. He endeavoured to straighten himself into perpendicularity, and to stand steadily on his legs. He accomplished half his object by stiffening all his joints but those of his ankles, and from these the rest of his body vibrated upwards with the inflexibility of a bar. After thus oscillating for a time, like an inverted pendulum, finding that the attention requisite to preserve his rigidity absorbed all he could collect of his dissipated energy, and that he required a portion of them for the management of his voice, which he felt a dizzy desire to wield with peculiar steadiness in the presence of the son of the king, he suddenly relaxed the muscles that perform the operation of sitting, and dropped into his chair like a plummet. He then, with a gracious gesticulation, invited Prince Elphin to take his seat on his right hand, and proceeded to compose himself into a dignified attitude, throwing his body back into the left corner of his chair, resting his left elbow on its arm and his left cheek-bone on the middle of the back of his left hand, placing his left foot on a footstool, and stretching out his right leg as straight and as far as his position allowed. He had thus his right hand at liberty, for the ornament of his eloquence and the conduct of his liquor.

Elphin seated himself at the right hand of Seithenyn. Teithrin remained at the end of the hall: on which Seithenyn exclaimed, "Come on, man, come on. What if you be not the son of a king, you are the guest of Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi. The most honourable place to the most honourable guest, and the next most honourable place to the next most honourable guest; the least honourable guest

An embankment of massy stone protected this lowland country from the sea, which was said, in the traditions older than the embankment, to have, in occasional spring-tides, paid short but unwelcome visits to the interior inhabitants, and to have, by slow aggressions, encroached considerably on the land. To prevent the repetition of the first of these inconveniences, and to check the progress of the second, the people of Gwaelod had built the stony rampart, which had withstood the shock of the waves for centuries, when Gwythno began his reign.

Gwythno, like other kings, found the business of governing too light a matter to fill up the vacancy of either his time or his head, and took to the more solid pursuits of harping and singing; not forgetting feasting, in which he was glorious; nor hunting, wherein he was mighty. His several pursuits composed a very harmonious triad. The chace conduced to the good cheer of the feast, and to the good appetite which consumed it; the feast inspired the song; and the song gladdened the feast, and celebrated the chace.

Gwythno and his subjects went on together very happily. They had little to do with him but to pay him revenue, and he had little to do with them but to receive it. Now and then they were called on to fight for the protection of his sacred person, and for the privilege of paying revenue to him rather than to any of the kings in his vicinity, a privilege of which they were particularly tenacious. His lands being far more fertile, and his people, consequently, far more numerous, than those of the rocky dwellers on his borders, he was always victorious in the defensive warfare to which he restricted his military achievements; and, after the invaders of his dominions had received two or three inflictions of signal chastisement, they limited their aggressions to coming quietly in the night, and vanishing, before morning, with cattle: an heroic operation, in which the preeminent glory of Scotland renders the similar exploits of other nations not worth recording.

Gwythno was not fond of the sea: a moonstruck bard had warned him to beware of the oppression of Gwenhidwy;* and he thought he could best do so by keeping as far as possible out of her way. He had a palace built of choice slat

* *Gwen-hudiw*, "the white alluring one:" the name of a mermaid. Used figuratively for the elemental power of the sea.

stone on the rocky banks of the Mawddach, just above the point where it quitted its native mountains, and entered the plain of Gwaelod. Here, among green woods and sparkling waters, he lived in festal munificence, and expended his revenue in encouraging agriculture, by consuming a large quantity of produce.

Watch-towers were erected along the embankment, and watchmen were appointed to guard against the first approaches of damage or decay. The whole of these towers, and their companies of guards, were subordinate to a central castle, which commanded the seaport already mentioned, and wherein dwelt Prince Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi, who held the office of Arglwyd Gorwarcheidwad yr Argae Breninawl, which signifies, in English, Lord High Commissioner of Royal Embankment; and he executed it as a personage so denominated might be expected to do: he drank the profits, and he left the embankment to his deputies, who left it to their assistants, who left it to itself.

The condition of the head, in a composite, as in a simple body, affects the entire organization to the extremity of the tail, excepting that, as the tail in the figurative body usually receives the largest share in the distribution of punishment, and the smallest in the distribution of reward, it has the stronger stimulus to ward off evil, and the smaller supply of means to indulge in diversion; and it sometimes happens that one of the least regarded of the component parts of the said tail will, from a pure sense of duty, or an inveterate love of business, or an oppressive sense of ennui, or a development of the organ of order, or some other equally cogent reason, cheerfully undergo all the care and labour, of which the honour and profit will redound to higher quarters.

Such a component portion of the Gwaelod High Commission of Royal Embankment was Teithren ap Tathral, who had the charge of a watch-tower where the embankment terminated at the point of Mochres, in the high land of Ardudwy. Teithrin kept his portion of the embankment in exemplary condition, and paced with daily care the limits of his charge; but one day, by some accident, he strayed beyond them, and observed symptoms of neglect that filled him with dismay. This circumstance induced him to proceed till his wanderings brought him round to the embankment's southern termination in the high land of Caredigion. He met with

abundant hospitality at the towers of his colleagues, and at the castle of Seithenyn: he was supposed to be walking for his amusement; he was asked no questions, and he carefully abstained from asking any. He examined and observed in silence; and, when he had completed his observations, he hastened to the palace of Gwythno.

Preparations were making for a high festival, and Gwythno was composing an ode. Teithrin knew better than to interrupt him in his *awen.**

Gwythno had a son named Elphin, who is celebrated in history as the most expert of fishers. Teithrin, finding the king impracticable, went in search of the young prince.

Elphin had been all the morning fishing in the Mawddach, in a spot where the river, having quitted the mountains and not yet entered the plain, ran in alternate streams and pools sparkling through a pastoral valley. Elphin sat under an ancient ash, enjoying the calm brightness of an autumnal noon, and the melody and beauty of the flying stream, on which the shifting sunbeams fell chequering through the leaves. The monotonous music of the river, and the profound stillness of the air, had contributed to the deep abstraction of a meditation into which Elphin had fallen. He was startled into attention by a sudden rush of the wind through the trees, and during the brief interval of transition from the state of reverie to that of perfect consciousness, he heard, or seemed to hear, in the gust that hurried by him, the repetition of the words, "Beware of the oppression of Gwenhidwy." The gust was momentary: the leaves ceased to rustle, and the deep silence of nature returned.

The prophecy, which had long haunted the memory and imagination of his father, had been often repeated to Elphin, and had sometimes occupied his thoughts, but it had formed no part of his recent meditation, and he could not persuade himself that the words had not been actually spoken near him. He emerged from the shade of the trees that fringed the river, and looked round him from the rocky bank.

At this moment Teithrin ap Tathral discovered and approached him.

Elphin knew him not, and inquired his name. He answered, "Teithrin ap Tathral."

"And what seek you here?" said Elphin.

* The rapturous and abstracted state of poetical inspiration.

"I seek," answered Teithrin, "the Prince of Gwaelod, Elphin ap Gwythno Garanhir."

"You spoke," said Elphin, "as you approached." Teithrin answered in the negative.

"Assuredly you did," said Elphin. "You repeated the words, 'Beware of the oppression of Gwenhidwy.'"

Teithrin denied having spoken the words; but their mysterious impression made Elphin listen readily to his information and advice; and the result of their conference was a determination, on the part of the prince, to accompany Teithren ap Tathral on a visit of remonstrance to the Lord High Commissioner.

They crossed the centre of the enclosed country to the privileged port of Gwythno, near which stood the castle of Seithenyn. They walked towards the castle along a portion of the embankment, and Teithrin pointed out to the prince its dilapidated condition. The sea shone with the glory of the setting sun; the air was calm; and the white surf, tinged with the crimson of sunset, broke lightly on the sands below. Elphin turned his eyes from the dazzling splendour of the Plain of Gwaelod; the trees, that in the distance thickened into woods; the wreaths of smoke rising from among them, marking the solitary cottages, or the populous towns; the massy barrier of mountains beyond, with the forest rising from their base; the precipices frowning over the forest; and the clouds resting on their summits, reddened with the reflection of the west. Elphin gazed earnestly on the peopled plain, reposing in the calm of evening between the mountains and the sea, and thought, with deep feelings of secret pain, how much of life and human happiness was entrusted to the ruinous mound on which he stood.

CHAPTER II.

THE DRUNKENNESS OF SEITHENYN.

The three immortal drunkards of the isle of Britain: Ceraint of Essyllwg; Gwrtheyrn Gwrthenau; and Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi. —Triads of the Isle of Britain.

THE sun had sunk beneath the waves when they reached the castle of Seithenyn. The sound of the harp and the song saluted them as they approached it. As they entered

the great hall, which was already blazing with torchlight, they found his highness, and his highness's household, convincing themselves and each other, with wine and wassail, of the excellence of their system of virtual superintendence; and the following jovial chorus broke on the ears of the visitors:

THE CIRCLING OF THE MEAD HORNS.

Fill the blue horn, the blue buffalo horn:
Natural is mead in the buffalo horn:
As the cuckoo in spring, as the lark in the morn,
So natural is mead in the buffalo horn.

As the cup of the flower to the bee when he sips,
Is the full cup of mead to the true Briton's lips:
From the flower-cups of summer, on field and on tree,
Our mead cups are filled by the vintager bee.

Seithenyn* ap Seithyn, the generous, the bold,
Drinks the wine of the stranger from vessels of gold;†
But we from the horn, the blue silver-rimmed horn,
Drink the ale and the mead in our fields that were born.

The ale-froth is white, and the mead sparkles bright;
They both smile apart, and with smiles they unite:‡
The mead from the flower, and the ale from the corn,
Smile, sparkle, and sing in the buffalo horn.

The horn, the blue horn, cannot stand on its tip;
Its path is right on from the hand to the lip:
Though the bowl and the wine-cup our tables adorn,
More natural the draught from the buffalo horn.

But Seithenyn ap Seithyn, the generous, the bold,
Drinks the bright-flowing wine from the far-gleaming gold:
The wine, in the bowl by his lip that is worn,
Shall be glorious as mead in the buffalo horn.

The horns circle fast, but their fountains will last,
As the stream passes ever, and never is past:
Exhausted so quickly, replenished so soon,
They wax and they wane like the horns of the moon.

Fill high the blue horn, the blue buffalo horn;
Fill high the long silver-rimmed buffalo horn:
While the roof of the hall by our chorus is torn,
Fill, fill to the brim the deep silver-rimmed horn.

* The accent is on the second syllable: Seithényn.

† Gwin . . . . o eur . . . . ANEURIN.

‡ The mixture of ale and mead made *bradawd*, a favourite drink of the Ancient Britons.

above the most honourable inmate; and, where there are but two guests, be the most honourable who he may, the least honourable of the two is next in honour to the most honourable of the two, because there are no more but two; and, where there are only two, there can be nothing between. Therefore sit, and drink. GWIN O EUR: wine from gold."

Elphin motioned Teithrin to approach, and sit next to him.

Prince Seithenyn, whose liquor was "his eating and his drinking solely," seemed to measure the gastronomy of his guests by his own; but his groom of the pantry thought the strangers might be disposed to eat, and placed before them a choice of provision, on which Teithrin ap Tathral did vigorous execution.

"I pray your excuses," said Seithenyn, "my stomach is weak, and I am subject to dizziness in the head, and my memory is not so good as it was, and my faculties of attention are somewhat impaired, and I would dilate more upon the topic, whereby you should hold me excused, but I am troubled with a feverishness and parching of the mouth, that very much injures my speech, and impedes my saying all I would say, and will say before I have done, in token of my loyalty and fealty to your highness and your highness's house. I must just moisten my lips, and I will then proceed with my observations. Cupbearer, fill."

"Prince Seithenyn," said Elphin, "I have visited you on a subject of deep moment. Reports have been brought to me, that the embankment, which has been so long entrusted to your care, is in a state of dangerous decay."

"Decay," said Seithenyn, "is one thing, and danger is another. Everything that is old must decay. That the embankment is old, I am free to confess; that it is somewhat rotten in parts, I will not altogether deny; that it is any the worse for that, I do most sturdily gainsay. It does its business well: it works well: it keeps out the water from the land, and it lets in the wine upon the High Commission of Embankment. Cupbearer, fill. Our ancestors were wiser than we: they built it in their wisdom; and, if we should be so rash as to try to mend it, we should only mar it."

"The stonework," said Teithrin, "is sapped and mined: the piles are rotten, broken, and dislocated: the floodgates and sluices are leaky and creaky."

"That is the beauty of it," said Seithenyn. "Some parts of it are rotten, and some parts of it are sound."

"It is well," said Elphin, "that some parts are sound: it were better that all were so."

"So I have heard some people say before," said Seithenyn; "perverse people, blind to venerable antiquity: that very unamiable sort of people, who are in the habit of indulging their reason. But I say, the parts that are rotten give elasticity to those that are sound: they give them elasticity, elasticity, elasticity. If it were all sound, it would break by its own obstinate stiffness: the soundness is checked by the rottenness, and the stiffness is balanced by the elasticity. There is nothing so dangerous as innovation. See the waves in the equinoctial storms, dashing and clashing, roaring and pouring, spattering and battering, rattling and battling against it. I would not be so presumptuous as to say, I could build anything that would stand against them half an hour; and here this immortal old work, which God forbid the finger of modern mason should bring into jeopardy, this immortal work has stood for centuries, and will stand for centuries more, if we let it alone. It is well: it works well: let well alone. Cupbearer, fill. It was half rotten when I was born, and that is a conclusive reason why it should be three parts rotten when I die."

The whole body of the High Commission roared approbation.

"And after all," said Seithenyn, "the worst that could happen would be the overflow of a spring-tide, for that was the worst that happened before the embankment was thought of; and, if the high water should come in, as it did before, the low water would go out again, as it did before. We should be no deeper in it than our ancestors were, and we could mend as easily as they could make."

"The level of the sea," said Teithrin, "is materially altered."

"The level of the sea!" exclaimed Seithenyn. "Who ever heard of such a thing as altering the level of the sea? Alter the level of that bowl of wine before you, in which, as I sit here, I see a very ugly reflection of your very good-looking face. Alter the level of that: drink up the reflection: let me see the face without the reflection, and leave the sea to level itself."

"Not to level the embankment," said Teithrin.

"Good, very good," said Seithenyn. "I love a smart saying, though it hits at me. But whether yours is a smart saying or no, I do not very clearly see; and, whether it hits at me or no, I do not very sensibly feel. But all is one. Cupbearer, fill."

"I think," pursued Seithenyn, looking as intently as he could at Teithrin ap Tathral, "I have seen something very like you before. There was a fellow here the other day very like you: he stayed here some time: he would not talk: he did nothing but drink: he used to drink till he could not stand, and then he went walking about the embankment. I suppose he thought it wanted mending; but he did not say anything. If he had, I should have told him to embank his own throat, to keep the liquor out of that. That would have posed him: he could not have answered that; he would not have had a word to say for himself after that."

"He must have been a miraculous person," said Teithrin, "to walk when he could not stand."

"All is one for that," said Seithenyn. "Cupbearer, fill."

"Prince Seithenyn," said Elphin, "if I was not aware that wine speaks in the silence of reason, I should be astonished at your strange vindication of your neglect of duty, which I take shame to myself for not having sooner known and remedied. The wise bard has well observed, 'Nothing is done without the eye of the king.'"

"I am very sorry," said Seithenyn, "that you see things in a wrong light: but we will not quarrel, for three reasons: first, because you are the son of the king, and may do and say what you please without any one having a right to be displeased: second, because I never quarrel with a guest, even if he grows riotous in his cups: third, because there is nothing to quarrel about; and perhaps that is the best reason of the three; or, rather, the first is the best, because you are the son of the king; and the third is the second, that is, the second best, because there is nothing to quarrel about: and the second is nothing to the purpose, because, though guests will grow riotous in their cups, in spite of my good orderly example, God forbid I should say that is the case with you. And I completely agree in the truth of your remark, that reason speaks in the silence of wine."

Seithenyn accompanied his speech with a vehement swing-

ing of his right hand: in so doing, at this point, he dropped his cup: a sudden impulse of rash volition to pick it dexterously up, before he resumed his discourse, ruined all his devices for maintaining dignity; in stooping forward from his chair he lost his balance, and fell prostrate on the floor.

The whole body of the High Commission arose in simultaneous confusion, each zealous to be the foremost in uplifting his fallen chief. In the vehemence of their uprise, they hurled the benches backward, and the tables forward; the crash of cups and bowls accompanied their overthrow; and rivulets of liquor ran gurgling through the hall. The household wished to redeem the credit of their leader in the eyes of the prince; but the only service they could render him was to participate in his discomfiture; for Seithenyn, as he was first in dignity, was also, as was fitting, hardest in skull; and that which had impaired his equilibrium had utterly destroyed theirs. Some fell, in the first impulse, with the tables and benches; others were tripped up by the rolling bowls; and the remainder fell at different points of progression, by jostling against each other, or stumbling over those who had fallen before them.

CHAPTER III.

THE OPPRESSION OF GWENHIDWY.

Nid meddw y dyn a allo
Cwnu ei hun a rhodio,
Ac yved rhagor ddiawd:
Nid yw hyny yn veddwdawd.

Not drunk is he, who from the floor
Can rise alone, and still drink more:
But drunk is he who prostrate lies,
Without the power to drink or rise.

A SIDE door, at the upper end of the hall, to the left of Seithenyn's chair, opened, and a beautiful young girl entered the hall, with her domestic bard, and her attendant maidens.

It was Angharad, the daughter of Seithenyn. The tumult had drawn her from the solitude of her chamber, apprehensive that some evil might befall her father in that incapability

of self-protection to which he made a point of bringing himself by set of sun. She gracefully saluted Prince Elphin, and directed the cupbearers (who were bound by their office to remain half-sober till the rest of the company were finished off, after which they indemnified themselves at leisure)—she directed the cupbearers to lift up Prince Seithenyn, and bear him from the hall. The cupbearers reeled off with their lord, who had already fallen asleep, and who now began to play them a pleasant march with his nose, to inspirit their progression.

Elphin gazed with delight on the beautiful apparition, whose gentle and serious loveliness contrasted so strikingly with the broken trophies and fallen heroes of revelry that lay scattered at her feet.

"Stranger," she said, "this seems an unfitting place for you: let me conduct you where you will be more agreeably lodged."

"Still less should I deem it fitting for you, fair maiden," said Elphin.

She answered, "The pleasure of her father is the duty of Angharad."

Elphin was desirous to protract the conversation, and this very desire took from him the power of speaking to the purpose. He paused for a moment to collect his ideas, and Angharad stood still, in apparent expectation that he would show symptoms of following, in compliance with her invitation.

In this interval of silence, he heard the loud dashing of the sea, and the blustering of the wind through the apertures of the walls.

This supplied him with what has been, since Britain was Britain, the alpha and omega of British conversation. He said, "It seems a stormy night."

She answered, "We are used to storms: we are far from the mountains, between the lowlands and the sea, and the winds blow round us from all quarters."

There was another pause of deep silence. The noise of the sea was louder, and the gusts pealed like thunder through the apertures. Amidst the fallen and sleeping revellers, the confused and littered hall, the low and wavering torches, Angharad, lovely always, shone with single and surpassing loveliness. The gust died away in murmurs, and swelled again into thunder, and died away in murmurs again; and, as it

died away, mixed with the murmurs of ocean, a voice, that seemed one of the many voices of the wind, pronounced the ominous words, "Beware of the oppression of Gwenhidwy."

They looked at each other, as if questioning whether all had heard alike.

"Did you not hear a voice?" said Angharad, after a pause.

"The same," said Elphin, "which has once before seemed to say to me, 'Beware of the oppression of Gwenhidwy.'"

Teithrin hurried forth on the rampart: Angharad turned pale, and leaned against a pillar of the hall. Elphin was amazed and awed, absorbed as his feelings were in her. The sleepers on the floor made an uneasy movement, and uttered an inarticulate cry.

Teithrin returned. "What saw you?" said Elphin.

Teithrin answered, "A tempest is coming from the west. The moon has waned three days, and is half hidden in clouds, just visible above the mountains: the bank of clouds is black in the west; the scud is flying before them; and the white waves are rolling to the shore."

"This is the highest of the spring-tides," said Angharad, "and they are very terrible in the storms from the west, when the spray flies over the embankment, and the breakers shake the tower which has its foot in the surf."

"Whence was the voice," said Elphin, "which we heard erewhile? Was it the cry of a sleeper in his drink, or an error of the fancy, or a warning voice from the elements?"

"It was surely nothing earthly," said Angharad, "nor was it an error of the fancy, for we all heard the words, 'Beware of the oppression of Gwenhidwy.' Often and often, in the storms of the spring-tides, have I feared to see her roll her power over the fields of Gwaelod."

"Pray heaven she do not to-night," said Teithrin.

"Can there be such a danger?" said Elphin.

"I think," said Teithrin, "of the decay I have seen, and I fear the voice I have heard."

A long pause of deep silence ensued, during which they heard the intermitting peals of the wind, and the increasing sound of the rising sea swelling progressively into wilder and more menacing tumult, till, with one terrific impulse, the whole violence of the equinoctial tempest seemed to burst upon the shore. It was one of those tempests which occur once in several centuries, and which, by their extensive

devastations, are chronicled to eternity; for a storm that signalizes its course with extraordinary destruction, becomes as worthy of celebration as a hero for the same reason. The old bard seemed to be of this opinion; for the turmoil which appalled Elphin, and terrified Angharad, fell upon his ears as the sound of inspiration: the *awen* came upon him; and, seizing his harp, he mingled his voice and his music with the uproar of the elements:

THE SONG OF THE FOUR WINDS.*

Wind from the north: the young spring day
Is pleasant on the sunny mead;
The merry harps at evening play;
The dance gay youths and maidens lead:
The thrush makes chorus from the thorn:
The mighty drinker fills his horn.

Wind from the east: the shore is still;
The mountain-clouds fly tow'rds the sea;
The ice is on the winter-rill;
The great hall fire is blazing free:
The prince's circling feast is spread:
Drink fills with fumes the brainless head.

Wind from the south: in summer shade
'Tis sweet to hear the loud harp ring;
Sweet is the step of comely maid,
Who to the bard a cup doth bring:
The black crow flies where carrion lies:
Where pignuts lurk, the swine will work.

Wind from the west: the autumnal deep
Rolls on the shore its billowy pride:
He, who the rampart's watch must keep,
Will mark with awe the rising tide:
The high spring-tide that bursts its mound,
May roll o'er miles of level ground.

Wind from the west: the mighty wave
Of ocean bounds o'er rock and sand;
The foaming surges roar and rave
Against the bulwarks of the land:

* This poem is a specimen of a numerous class of ancient Welsh poems, in which each stanza begins with a repetition of the predominant idea, and terminates with a proverb, more or less applicable to the subject. In some poems, the sequency of the main images is regular and connected, and the proverbial terminations strictly appropriate: in others, the sequency of the main images is loose and incoherent, and the proverbial termination has little or nothing to do with the subject of the stanza. The basis of the poem in the text is in the Englynion of Llwyarch Hên.

When waves are rough, and winds are high,
Good is the land that's high and dry.

Wind from the west: the storm-clouds rise;
The breakers rave: the whirlblasts roar;
The mingled rage of seas and skies
Bursts on the low and lonely shore:
When safety's far, and danger nigh,
Swift feet the readiest aid supply.

Wind from the west——

His song was cut short by a tremendous crash. The tower, which had its foot in the sea, had long been sapped by the waves; the storm had prematurely perfected the operation, and the tower fell into the surf, carrying with it a portion of the wall of the main building, and revealing through the chasm the white raging of the breakers beneath the blackness of the midnight storm. The wind rushed into the hall, extinguishing the torches within the line of its course, tossing the gray locks and loose mantle of the bard, and the light white drapery and long black tresses of Angharad. With the crash of the falling tower, and the simultaneous shriek of the women, the sleepers started from the floor, staring with drunken amazement; and, shortly after, reeling like an Indian from the wine-rolling Hydaspes,* in staggered Seithenyn ap Seithyn.

Seithenyn leaned against a pillar, and stared at the sea through the rifted wall with wild and vacant surprise. He perceived that there was an innovation, and he felt that he was injured: how, and by whom, he did not quite so clearly discern. He looked at Elphin and Teithrin, at his daughter, and at the members of his household, with a long and dismal aspect of blank and mute interrogation, modified by the struggling consciousness of puzzled self-importance, which seemed to require from his chiefship some word of command in this incomprehensible emergency. But the longer he looked, the less clearly he saw; and the longer he pondered, the less he understood. He felt the rush of the wind; he

* In the fourteenth and fifteenth books of the Dionysiaca of Nonnus, Bacchus changes the river Astacis into wine; and the multitudinous army of water-drinking Indians proceeding to quench their thirst in the stream, become frantically drunk, and fall an easy prey to the Bacchic invaders. In the thirty-fifth book, the experiment is repeated on the Hydaspes. "*Ainsi conquesta Bacchus l'Inde*," as Rabelais has it.

saw the white foam of the sea; his ears were dizzy with their mingled roar. He remained at length motionless, leaning against the pillar, and gazing on the breakers with fixed and glaring vacancy.

"The sleepers of Gwaelod," said Elphin, "they who sleep in peace and security, trusting to the vigilance of Seithenyn, what will become of them?"

"Warn them with the beacon fire," said Teithrin, "if there be fuel on the summit of the landward tower."

"That, of course, has been neglected too," said Elphin.

"Not so," said Angharad; "that has been my charge."

Teithrin seized a torch, and ascended the eastern tower, and in a few minutes, the party in the hall beheld the breakers reddening with the reflected fire, and deeper, and yet deeper crimson tinging the whirling foam, and sheeting the massy darkness of the bursting waves.

Seithenyn turned his eyes on Elphin. His recollection of him was extremely faint, and the longer he looked on him he remembered him the less. He was conscious of the presence of strangers, and of the occurrence of some signal mischief, and associated the two circumstances in his dizzy perceptions with a confused, but close connection. He said at length, looking sternly at Elphin, "I do not know what right the wind has to blow upon me here; nor what business the sea has to show itself here; nor what business you have here: but one thing is very evident, that either my castle or the sea is on fire; and I shall be glad to know who has done it, for terrible shall be the vengeance of Seithenyn ap Seithyn. Show me the enemy," he pursued, drawing his sword furiously, and flourishing it over his head, "Show me the enemy; show me the enemy!"

An unusual tumult mingled with the roar of the waves; a sound, the same in kind, but greater in degree, with that produced by the loose stones of the beach, which are rolled to and fro by the surf.

Teithrin rushed into the hall, exclaiming, "All is over! the mound is broken; and the spring-tide is rolling through the breach!"

Another portion of the castle wall fell into the mining waves, and, by the dim and thickly-clouded moonlight, and the red blaze of the beacon fire, they beheld a torrent pouring in from the sea upon the plain, and rushing immediately

beneath the castle walls, which, as well as the points of the embankment that formed the sides of the breach, continued to crumble away into the waters.

"Who has done this?" vociferated Seithenyn. "Show me the enemy."

"There is no enemy but the sea," said Elphin, "to which you, in your drunken madness, have abandoned the land. Think, if you can think, of what is passing in the plain. The storm drowns the cries of your victims; but the curses of the perishing are upon you."

"Show me the enemy," vociferated Seithenyn, flourishing his sword more furiously.

Angharad looked deprecatingly at Elphin, who abstained from further reply.

"There is no enemy but the sea," said Teithrin, "against which your sword avails not."

"Who dares to say so?" said Seithenyn. "Who dares to say that there is an enemy on earth against whom the sword of Seithenyn ap Seithyn is unavailing? Thus, thus I prove the falsehood."

And, springing suddenly forward, he leaped into the torrent, flourishing his sword as he descended.

"Oh, my unhappy father!" sobbed Angharad, veiling her face with her arm on the shoulder of one of her female attendants, whom Elphin dexterously put aside, and substituted himself as the supporter of the desolate beauty.

"We must quit the castle," said Teithrin, "or we shall be buried in its ruins. We have but one path of safety, along the summit of the embankment, if there be not another breach between us and the high land, and if we can keep our footing in this hurricane. But there is no alternative. The walls are melting away like snow."

The bard, who was now recovered from his *awen*, and beginning to be perfectly alive to his own personal safety, conscious at the same time that the first duty of his privileged order was to animate the less-gifted multitude by examples of right conduct in trying emergencies, was the first to profit by Teithrin's admonition, and to make the best of his way through the door that opened to the embankment, on which he had no sooner set his foot than he was blown down by the wind, his harp-strings ringing as he fell. He was indebted to the

impediment of his harp, for not being rolled down the mound into the waters which were rising within.

Teithrin picked him up, and admonished him to abandon his harp to its fate, and fortify his steps with a spear. The bard murmured objections: and even the reflection that he could more easily get another harp than another life, did not reconcile him to parting with his beloved companion. He got over the difficulty by slinging his harp, cumbrous as it was, to his left side, and taking a spear in his right hand.

Angharad, recovering from the first shock of Seithenyn's catastrophe, became awake to the imminent danger. The spirit of the Cymric female, vigilant and energetic in peril, disposed her and her attendant maidens to use their best exertions for their own preservation. Following the advice and example of Elphin and Teithrin, they armed themselves with spears, which they took down from the walls.

Teithrin led the way, striking the point of his spear firmly into the earth, and leaning from it on the wind: Angharad followed in the same manner: Elphin followed Angharad, looking as earnestly to her safety as was compatible with moderate care of his own: the attendant maidens followed Elphin; and the bard, whom the result of his first experiment had rendered unambitious of the van, followed the female train. Behind them went the cupbearers, whom the accident of sobriety had qualified to march: and behind them reeled and roared those of the bacchanal rout who were able and willing to move; those more especially who had wives or daughters to support their tottering steps. Some were incapable of locomotion, and others, in the heroic madness of liquor, sat down to await their destiny, as they finished the half-drained vessels.

The bard, who had somewhat of a picturesque eye, could not help sparing a little leisure from the care of his body, to observe the effects before him: the volumed blackness of the storm; the white bursting of the breakers in the faint and scarcely-perceptible moonlight; the rushing and rising of the waters within the mound; the long floating hair and waving drapery of the young women; the red light of the beacon fire falling on them from behind; the surf rolling up the side of the embankment, and breaking almost at their feet; the spray flying above their heads; and the resolution with which they impinged the stony ground with their spears, and bore themselves up against the wind.

[redacted]

Thus they began their march. They had not proceeded far, when the tide began to recede, the wind to abate somewhat of its violence, and the moon to look on them at intervals through the rifted clouds, disclosing the desolation of the inundated plain, silvering the tumultuous surf, gleaming on the distant mountains, and revealing a lengthened prospect of their solitary path, that lay in its irregular line like a ribbon on the deep.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF GWYTHNO.

> Οὐ παύσομαι τὰς Χάριτας
> Μούσαις συγκαταμιγνύς.
> Ἥδιστον σύζυγιαν.—Euripides.
>
> Not, though grief my age defaces,
> Will I cease, in concert dear,
> Blending still the gentle graces
> With the muses more severe.

KING GWYTHNO had feasted joyously, and had sung his new ode to a chosen party of his admiring subjects, amidst their, of course, enthusiastic applause. He heard the storm raging without, as he laid himself down to rest: he thought it a very hard case for those who were out in it, especially on the sea; congratulated himself on his own much more comfortable condition; and went to sleep with a pious reflection on the goodness of Providence to himself.

He was roused from a pleasant dream by a confused and tumultuous dissonance that mingled with the roar of the tempest. Rising with much reluctance, and looking forth from his window, he beheld in the moonlight a half-naked multitude, larger than his palace thrice multiplied could have contained, pressing round the gates, and clamouring for admission and shelter: while beyond them his eye fell on the phenomenon of stormy waters, rolling in the place of the fertile fields from which he derived his revenue.

Gwythno, though a king and his own laureate, was not without sympathy for the people who had the honour and happiness of victualling his royal house, and he issued forth on his balcony full of perplexities and alarms, stunned by the

sudden sense of the half-understood calamity, and his head still dizzy from the effects of abruptly-broken sleep, and the vapours of the overnight's glorious festival.

Gwythno was altogether a reasonably good sort of person, and a poet of some note. His people were somewhat proud of him on the latter score, and very fond of him on the former; for even the tenth part of those homely virtues, that decorate the memories of "husbands kind and fathers dear" in every churchyard, are matters of plebeian admiration in the persons of royalty; and every tangible point in every such virtue so located, becomes a convenient peg for the suspension of love and loyalty. While, therefore, they were unanimous in consigning the soul of Seithenyn to a place that no well-bred divine will name to a polite congregation, they overflowed, in the abundance of their own griefs, with a portion of sympathy for Gwythno, and saluted him, as he issued forth on his balcony, with a hearty *Duw cadw y Brenin*, or God save the King, which he returned with a benevolent wave of the hand; but they followed it up by an intense vociferation for food and lodging, which he received with a pitiful shake of the head.

Meanwhile the morning dawned: the green spots, that peered with the ebbing tide above the waste of waters, only served to indicate the irremediableness of the general desolation.

Gwythno proceeded to hold a conference with his people, as deliberately as the stormy state of the weather and their minds, and the confusion of his own, would permit. The result of the conference was, that they should use their best exertions to catch some stray beeves, which had escaped the inundation, and were lowing about the rocks in search of new pastures. This measure was carried into immediate effect: the victims were killed and roasted, carved, distributed, and eaten, in a very Homeric fashion, and washed down with a large portion of the contents of the royal cellars; after which, having more leisure to dwell on their losses, the fugitives of Gwaelod proceeded to make loud lamentation, all collectively for home and for country, and severally for wife or husband, parent or child, whom the flood had made its victims.

In the midst of these lamentations arrived Elphin and Angharad, with her bard and attendant maidens, and Teithrin ap Tathral. Gwythno, after a consultation, despatched

Teithrin and Angharad's domestic bard on an embassy to the court of Uther Pendragon, and to such of the smaller kings as lay in the way, to solicit such relief as their several majesties might be able and willing to afford to a king in distress. It is said that the bard, finding a royal bardship vacant in a more prosperous court, made the most of himself in the market, and stayed where he was better fed and lodged than he could expect to be in Caredigion; but that Teithrin returned, with many valuable gifts, and most especially one from Merlin, being a hamper, which multiplied an hundredfold by morning whatever was put into it overnight, so that, for a ham and a flask put by in the evening, an hundred hams and an hundred flasks were taken out in the morning. It is at least certain that such a hamper is enumerated among the thirteen wonders of Merlin's art, and, in the authentic catalogue thereof, is called the hamper of Gwythno.

Be this as it may, Gwythno, though shorn of the beams of his revenue, kept possession of his palace. Elphin married Angharad, and built a salmon-weir on the Mawddach, the produce of which, with that of a series of beehives, of which his princess and her maidens made mead, constituted for some time the principal wealth and subsistence of the royal family of Caredigion.

King Gwythno, while his son was delving or fishing, and his daughter spinning or making mead, sat all day on the rocks, with his harp between his knees, watching the rolling of ocean over the locality of his past dominion, and pouring forth his soul in pathetic song on the change of his own condition, and the mutability of human things. Two of his songs of lamentation have been preserved by tradition: they are the only relics of his muse which time has spared.

GWYDDNAU EI CANT,

PAN DDOAI Y MOR DROS CANTREV Y GWAELAWD.

A SONG OF GWYTHNO GARANHIR,

ON THE INUNDATION OF THE SEA OVER THE PLAIN OF GWAELOD.

Stand forth, Seithenyn: winds are high:
Look down beneath the lowering sky;
Look from the rock: what meets thy sight?
Nought but the breakers rolling white.

Stand forth, Seithenyn: winds are still:
Look from the rock and heathy hill
For Gwythno's realm: what meets thy view?
Nought but the ocean's desert blue.

Curst be the treacherous mound that gave
A passage to the mining wave:
Curst be the cup with mead froth crowned,
That charmed from thought the trusted mound.

A tumult, and a cry to heaven!
The white surf breaks; the mound is riven:
Through the wide rift the ocean-spring
Bursts with tumultuous ravaging.

The western's ocean's stormy might
Is curling o'er the rampart's height:
Destruction strikes with want and scorn
Presumption from abundance born.

The tumult of the western deep
Is on the wind's affrighting sleep:
It thunders at my chamber-door,
It bids me wake to sleep no more.

The tumult of the midnight sea
Swells inland, wildly, fearfully:
The mountain-caves respond its shocks
Among the accustomed rocks.

The tumult of the vext sea-coast
Rolls inland like an armed host,
It leaves, for flocks and fertile land,
But foaming waves and treacherous sand.

The wild sea rolls where long have been
Glad homes of men, and pastures green:
To arrogance and wealth succeed
Wide ruin and avenging need.

Seithenyn, come: I call in vain:
The high of birth and weak of brain
Sleeps under ocean's lonely roar
Between the rampart and the shore.

The eternal waste of waters spread
Above his unrespected head,
The blue expanse, with foam besprent,
Is his too glorious monument.

ANOTHER SONG OF GWYTHNO.

I love the green and tranquil shore;
I hate the ocean's dizzy roar,
Whose devastating spray has flown
High o'er the monarch's barrier-stone.

Sad was the feast, which he who spread
Is numbered with the inglorious dead;
The feast within the torch-lit hall,
While stormy breakers mined the wall.

To him repentance came too late:
In cups the chatterer met his fate:
Sudden and sad the doom that burst
On him and me, but mine the worst.

I love the shore, and hate the deep:
The wave has robbed my nights of sleep;
The heart of man is cheered by wine;
But now the wine-cup cheers not mine.

The feast which bounteous hands dispense,
Makes glad the soul, and charms the sense:
But in the circling feast I know
The coming of my deadliest foe.

Blest be the rock, whose foot supplied
A step to them that fled the tide;
The rock of bards, on whose rude steep
I bless the shore and hate the deep.

"The sigh of Gwythno Garanhir when the breakers ploughed up his land"* is the substance of a proverbial distich, which may still be heard on the coast of Merioneth and Cardigan, to express the sense of an overwhelming calamity. The curious investigator may still land on a portion of the ancient stony rampart: which stretches, off the point of Mochres, far out into Cardigan Bay, nine miles of the summit being left dry, in calm weather, by the low water of the spring-tides; and which is now called Sarn Badrig, or St. Patrick's Causeway.

Thus the kingdom of Caredigion fell into ruin: its people were destroyed, or turned out of house and home; and its royal family were brought to a condition in which they found it difficult to get loaves to their fishes. We, who live in more enlightened times, amidst the "gigantic strides of intellect," when offices of public trust are so conscientiously and zealously discharged, and so vigilantly checked and superintended, may wonder at the wicked negligence of Seithenyn; at the sophisms with which, in his liquor, he vindicated his system, and pronounced the eulogium of his old dilapidations, and at the blind confidence of Gwythno

* Ochenaid Gwyddnau Garanhir
Pan droes y don dros ei dir.

and his people in this virtual guardian of their lives and property: happy that our own public guardians are too virtuous to act or talk like Seithenyn, and that we ourselves are too wise not to perceive, and too free not to prevent it, if they should be so disposed.

CHAPTER V.

THE PRIZE OF THE WEIR.

Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread;
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drank the milk of paradise.
COLERIDGE.

PRINCE ELPHIN constructed his salmon-weir on the Mawddach at the point where the fresh water met the top of the spring-tides. He built near it a dwelling for himself and Angharad, for which the old king Gwythno gradually deserted his palace. An amphitheatre of rocky mountains enclosed a pastoral valley. The meadows gave pasture to a few cows; and the flowers of the mountain-heath yielded store of honey to the bees of many hives, which were tended by Angharad and her hand-maids. Elphin had also some sheep, which wandered on the mountains. The worst was, they often wandered out of reach; but, when he could not find his sheep, he brought down a wild goat, the venison of Gwyneth. The woods and turbaries supplied unlimited fuel. The straggling cultivators, who had escaped from the desolation of Gwaelod, and settled themselves above the level of the sea, on a few spots propitious to the plough, still acknowledge their royalty, and paid them tribute in corn. But their principal wealth was fish. Elphin was the first Briton who caught fish on a large scale, and salted them for other purposes than home consumption.

The weir was thus constructed: a range of piles crossed the river from shore to shore, slanting upwards from both shores, and meeting at an angle in the middle of the river. A little down the stream a second range of piles crossed the river in *the same* manner, having towards the middle several wide *tervals* with light wicker gates, which, meeting at an angle,

were held together by the current, but were so constructed as to yield easily to a very light pressure from below. These gates gave all fish of a certain magnitude admission to a chamber, from which they could neither advance nor retreat, and from which, standing on a narrow bridge attached to the lower piles, Elphin bailed them up at leisure. The smaller fish passed freely up and down the river through the interstices of the piles. This weir was put together in the early summer, and taken to pieces and laid by in the autumn.

Prince Elphin, one fine July night, was sleepless and troubled in spirit. His fishery had been beyond all precedent unproductive, and the obstacle which this circumstance opposed to his arrangements for victualling his little garrison kept him for the better half of the night vigilant in unprofitable cogitation. Soon after the turn of midnight, when dreams are true, he was startled from an incipient doze by a sudden cry of Angharad, who had been favoured with a vision of a miraculous draught of fish. Elphin, as a drowning man catches at a straw, caught at the shadowy promise of Angharad's dream, and at once, beneath the clear light of the just-waning moon, he sallied forth with his princess to examine his weir.

The weir was built across the stream of the river, just above the flow of the ordinary tides; but the spring-tide had opened the wicker gates, and had floated up a coracle* between a pair of them, which closing, as the tide turned, on the coracle's nose, retained it within the chamber of the weir, at the same time that it kept the gates sufficiently open to permit the escape of any fish that might have entered the chamber. The great prize, which undoubtedly might have been there when Angharad dreamed of it, was gone to a fish.

Elphin, little pleased, stepped on the narrow bridge, and opened the gates with a pole that terminated piscatorially in a hook. The coracle began dropping down the stream. Elphin arrested its course, and guided it to land.

In the coracle lay a sleeping child, clothed in splendid apparel. Angharad took it in her arms. The child opened its eyes, and stretched its little arms towards her with a smile; and she uttered, in delight and wonder at its surpassing beauty, the exclamation of "Taliesin!" "Radiant brow!"

* A small boat of basketwork, sheathed with leather.

Elphin, nevertheless, looked very dismal on finding no food, and an additional mouth; so dismal, that his physiognomy on that occasion passed into a proverb "As rueful as Elphin when he found Taliesin."*

In after-years, Taliesin, being on the safe side of prophecy, and writing after the event, addressed a poem to Elphin, in the character of the foundling of the coracle, in which he supposes himself at the moment of his discovery to have addressed Elphin as follows:

DYHUDDIANT ELFFIN.

THE CONSOLATION OF ELPHIN.

Lament not, Elphin: do not measure
By one brief hour thy loss or gain:
Thy weir to-night has borne a treasure,
Will more than pay thee years of pain.
St. Cynllo's aid will not be vain,
Smoothe thy bent brow, and cease to mourn:
Thy weir will never bear again
Such wealth as it to-night has borne.

The stormy seas, the silent rivers,
The torrents down the steeps that spring,
Alike of weal or woe are givers,
As pleases heaven's immortal king.
Though frail I seem, rich gifts I bring,
Which in Time's fulness shall appear,
Greater than if the stream should fling
Three hundred salmon in thy weir.

Cast off this fruitless sorrow, loading
With heaviness the unmanly mind:
Despond not; mourn not; evil boding
Creates the ill it fears to find.
When fates are dark, and most unkind
Are they who most should do thee right,
Then wilt thou know thine eyes were blind
To thy good fortune of to-night.

Though small and feeble, from my coracle
To thee my helpless hands I spread,
Yet in me breathes a holy oracle
To bid thee lift thy drooping head.
When hostile steps around thee tread,
A spell of power my voice shall wield,
That, more than arms with slaughter red,
Shall be thy refuge and thy shield.

* Mor drist ac Elffin pan gavod Taliesin.

Two years after this event, [illegible] Elphin with a daughter, whom they named [illegible]. The infant prospered, and the [illegible] among the more fertile parts of the [illegible] in a [illegible] to the [illegible].

CHAPTER VI.

THE EDUCATION OF TALIESIN.

The three objects of intellect: the true, the beautiful, and the beneficial.

The three foundations of wisdom: youth, to acquire learning; memory, to retain learning; and genius, to illustrate learning.—TRIADS OF WISDOM.

The three primary requisites of poetical genius: an eye that can see nature; a heart that can feel nature; and a resolution that dares follow nature.—TRIADS OF POETRY.

AS Taliesin grew up, Gwythno instructed him in all the knowledge of the age, which was of course not much in comparison with ours. The science of political economy was sleeping in the womb of time. The advantage of growing rich by getting into debt and paying interest was altogether unknown: the safe and economical currency, which is produced by a man writing his name on a bit of paper, for which other men give him their property, and which he is always ready to exchange for another bit of paper, of an equally safe and economical manufacture, being also equally ready to render his own person, at a moment's notice, as impalpable as the metal which he promises to pay, is a stretch of wisdom to which the people of those days had nothing to compare. They had no steam-engines, with fires as eternal as those of the nether world, wherein the squalid many, from infancy to age, might be turned into component portions of machinery for the benefit of the purple-faced few. They could neither poison the air with gas, nor the waters with its dregs: in short, they made their money of metal, and breathed pure air, and drank pure water, like unscientific barbarians.

Of moral science they had little; but morals, without science, they had about the same as we have. They had a number of fine precepts, partly from their religion, partly

from their bards, which they remembered in their liquor, and forgot in their business.

Political science they had none. The blessings of virtual representation were not even dreamed of; so that, when any of their barbarous metallic currency got into their pockets or coffers, it had a chance to remain there, subjecting them to the inconvenience of unemployed capital. Still they went to work politically much as we do. The powerful took all they could get from their subjects and neighbours; and called something or other sacred and glorious, when they wanted the people to fight for them. They repressed disaffection by force, when it showed itself in an overt act; but they encouraged freedom of speech, when it was, like Hamlet's reading, "words, words, words."

There was no liberty of the press, because there was no press; but there was liberty of speech to the bards, whose persons were inviolable, and the general motto of their order was Y GWIR YN ERBYN Y BYD: the Truth against the World. If many of them, instead of acting up to this splendid profession, chose to advance their personal fortunes by appealing to the selfishness, the passions, and the prejudices of kings, factions, and the rabble, our free press gentry may afford them a little charity out of the excess of their own virtue.

In physical science, they supplied the place of knowledge by converting conjectures into dogmas; an art which is not yet lost. They held that the earth was the centre of the universe; that an immense ocean surrounded the earth; that the sky was a vast frame resting on the ocean; that the circle of their contact was a mystery of infinite mist; with a great deal more of cosmogony and astronomy, equally correct and profound, which answered the same purpose as our more correct and profound astronomy answers now, that of elevating the mind, as the eidouranion lecturers have it, to sublime contemplations.

Medicine was cultivated by the Druids, and it was just as much a science with them as with us; but they had not the wit or the means to make it a flourishing trade; the principal means to that end being women with nothing to do, articles which especially belong to a high state of civilization.

The laws lay in a small compass: every bard had those of his own community by heart. The king, or chief, was the

judge; the plaintiff and defendant told their own story; and the cause was disposed of in one hearing. We may well boast of the progress of light, when we turn from this picture to the statutes at large, and the Court of Chancery: and we may indulge in a pathetic reflection on our sweet-faced myriads of "learned friends," who would be under the unpleasant necessity of suspending themselves by the neck, if this barbaric "Practice of the Courts" were suddenly revived.

The religion of the time was Christianity grafted on Druidism. The Christian faith had been very early preached in Britain. Some of the Welsh historians are of opinion that it was first preached by some of the apostles: most probably by St. John. They think the evidence inconclusive with respect to St. Paul. But, at any rate, the faith had made considerable progress among the Britons at the period of the arrival of Hengist; for many goodly churches, and, what was still better, richly-endowed abbeys, were flourishing in many places. The British clergy were, however, very contumacious towards the See of Rome, and would only acknowledge the spiritual authority of the Archbishopric of Caer Lleon, which was, during many centuries, the primacy of Britain. St. Augustin, when he came over, at a period not long subsequent to that of the present authentic history, to preach Christianity to the Saxons, who had, for the most part, held fast to their Odinism, had also the secondary purpose of making them instruments for teaching the British clergy submission to Rome: as a means to which end, the newly-converted Saxons set upon the monastery of Bangor Iscoed, and put its twelve hundred monks to the sword. This was the first overt act in which the Saxons set forth their new sense of a religion of peace. It is alleged, indeed, that these twelve hundred monks supported themselves by the labour of their own hands. If they did so, it was, no doubt, a gross heresy; but whether it deserved the castigation it received from St. Augustin's proselytes, may be a question in polemics.

As the people did not read the Bible, and had no religious tracts, their religion, it may be assumed, was not very pure. The rabble of Britons must have seen little more than the superficial facts that the lands, revenues, privileges, and so forth, which once belonged to Druids and so forth, now belonged *to abbots*, bishops, and so forth, who, like their ex-

truded precursors, walked occasionally in a row, chanting unintelligible words, and never speaking in common language but to exhort the people to fight; having, indeed, better notions than their predecessors of building, apparel, aud cookery; and a better knowledge of the means of obtaining good wine, and of the final purpose for which it was made.

They were observant of all matters of outward form, and tradition even places among them personages who were worthy to have founded a society for the suppression of vice. It is recorded in the Triads that "Gwrgi Garwlwyd killed a male and female of the Cymry daily, and devoured them; and on the Saturday he killed two of each, that he might not kill on the Sunday." This can only be a type of some sanctimonious hero who made a cloak of piety for oppressing the poor.

But, even among the Britons, in many of the least populous and most mountainous districts, Druidism was still struggling with Christianity. The lamb had driven the wolf from the rich pastures of the valleys to the high places of the wilderness, where the rites and mysteries of the old religion flourished in secrecy, and where a stray proselyte of the new light was occasionally caught and roasted for the glory of Andraste.

Taliesin, worshipping Nature in her wildest solitudes, often strayed away for days from the dwelling of Elphin, and penetrated the recesses of Eryri,* where one especial spot on the banks of Lake Ceirionydd became the favourite haunt of his youth. In these lonely recesses he became familiar with Druids, who initiated him in their mysteries, which, like all other mysteries, consisted of a quantity of allegorical mummery, pretending to be symbolical of the immortality of the soul, and of its progress through various stages of being; interspersed with a little, too literal, ducking and singeing of the aspirant, by way of trying his metal, just enough to put him in fear, but not in risk, of his life.

That Taliesin was thoroughly initiated in these mysteries is evident from several of his poems, which have neither head nor tail, and which, having no sense in any other point of view, must necessarily, as a learned mythologist has demonstrated, be assigned to the class of theology in which an occult sense can be found or made for them, according to the views

* Snowdon.

of the expounder. One of them, a shade less obscure than its companions, unquestionably adumbrates the Druidical doctrine of transmigration. According to this poem, Taliesin had been with the cherubim at the fall of Lucifer, in Paradise at the fall of man, and with Alexander at the fall of Babylon; in the ark with Noah, and in the milky way with Tetragrammaton; and in many other equally marvellous or memorable conditions: showing that, though the names and histories of the new religion were adopted, its doctrines had still to be learned; and, indeed, in all cases of this description, names are changed more readily than doctrines, and doctrines more readily than ceremonies.

When any of the Romans or Saxons, who invaded the island, fell into the hands of the Britons, before the introduction of Christianity, they were handed over to the Druids, who sacrificed them, with pious ceremonies, to their goddess Andraste. These human sacrifices have done much injury to the Druidical character amongst us, who never practise them in the same way. They lacked, it must be confessed, some of our light, and also some of our prisons. They lacked some of our light, to enable them to perceive that the act of coming, in great multitudes, with fire and sword, to the remote dwellings of peaceable men, with the premeditated design of cutting their throats, ravishing their wives and daughters, killing their children, and appropriating their worldly goods, belongs, not to the department of murder and robbery, but to that of legitimate war, of which all the practitioners are gentlemen, and entitled to be treated like gentlemen. They lacked some of our prisons, in which our philanthropy has provided accommodation for so large a portion of our own people, wherein, if they had left their prisoners alive, they could have kept them from returning to their countrymen, and being at their old tricks again immediately. They would also, perhaps, have found some difficulty in feeding them, from the lack of the county rates, by which the most sensible and amiable part of our nation, the country squires, contrive to coop up, and feed, at the public charge, all who meddle with the wild animals of which they have given themselves the monopoly. But as the Druids could neither lock up their captives, nor trust them at large, the darkness of their intellect could suggest no alternative to the process they adopted, of putting them out of the way, which

they did with all the sanctions of religion and law. If one of these old Druids could have slept, like the seven sleepers of Ephesus, and awaked, in the nineteenth century, some fine morning near Newgate, the exhibition of some half-dozen funipendulous forgers might have shocked the tender bowels of his humanity, as much as one of his wicker baskets of captives in the flames shocked those of Cæsar; and it would, perhaps, have been difficult to convince him that paper credit was not an idol, and one of a more sanguinary character than his Andraste. The Druids had their view of these matters, and we have ours; and it does not comport with the steam-engine speed of our march of mind to look at more than one side of a question.

The people lived in darkness and vassalage. They were lost in the grossness of beef and ale. They had no pamphleteering societies to demonstrate that reading and writing are better than meat and drink; and they were utterly destitute of the blessings of those "schools for all," the house of correction, and the treadmill, wherein the autochthonal justice of our agrestic kakistocracy now castigates the heinous sins which were then committed with impunity, of treading on old footpaths, picking up dead wood, and moving on the face of the earth within the sound of the whirr of a partridge.

The learning of the time was confined to the bards. It consisted in a somewhat complicated art of versification; in a great number of pithy apophthegms, many of which have been handed down to posterity under the title of the Wisdom of Catog; in an interminable accumulation of Triads, in which form they bound up all their knowledge, physical, traditional, and mythological; and in a mighty condensation of mysticism, being the still-cherished relics of the Druidical rites and doctrines.

The Druids were the sacred class of the bardic order. Before the change of religion, it was by far the most numerous class; for the very simple reason, that there was most to be got by it: all ages and nations having been sufficiently enlightened to make the trade of priest more profitable than that of poet. During this period, therefore, it was the only class that much attracted the notice of foreigners. After the change of religion, the denomination was retained as that of the second class of the order. The Bardd Braint, or Bard of Presidency, was of the ruling order, and wore a robe of sky-

[redacted]

blue. The Derwydd, or Druid, wore a robe of white. The Ovydd, or Ovate, was of the class of initiation, and wore a robe of green. The Awenyddion, or disciples, the candidates for admission into the Bardic order, wore a variegated dress of the three colours, and were passed through a very severe moral and intellectual probation.

Gwythno was a Bardd Braint, or Bard of Presidency, and as such he had full power in his own person, without the intervention of a Bardic Congress, to make his Awenydd, or disciple, Taliesin, an Ovydd, or Ovate, which he did accordingly. Angharad, under the old king's instructions, prepared the green robe of the young aspirant's investiture. He afterwards acquired the white robe amongst the Druids of Eryri.

In all Bardic learning, Gwythno was profound. All that he knew he taught to Taliesin. The youth drew in the draughts of inspiration among the mountain forests and the mountain streams, and grew up under the roof of Elphin, in the perfection of genius and beauty.

CHAPTER VII.

THE HUNTINGS OF MAELGON.

Αἰεὶ τὸ μὲν ζῇ, τὸ δὲ μεθίσταται κακὸν,
Τὸ δ' ἐκπέφηνεν ἀυτικ' ἐξ ἀρχῆς νέον.—EURIPIDES.

One ill is ever clinging:
One treads upon its heels;
A third, in distance springing,
Its fearful front reveals.

GWYTHNO slept, not with his fathers, for they were under the sea, but as near to them as was found convenient, within the sound of the breakers that rolled over their ancient dwellings. Elphin was now king of Caredigion, and was lord of a large but thinly-peopled tract of rock, mountain, forest, and bog. He held his sovereignty, however, not, as Gwythno had done during the days of the glory of Gwaelod, by that most indisputable sort of right which consists in might, but by the more precarious tenure of the absence of inclination in any of his brother kings to take away anything he had.

Uther Pendragon, like Gwythno, went the way of all flesh, and Arthur reigned in Caer Lleon, as king of the kings of Britain. Maelgon Gwyneth was then king of that part of North Wales which bordered on the kingdom of Caredigion.

Maelgon was a mighty hunter, and roused the echoes of the mountains with horn and with hound. He went forth to the chace as to war, provisioned for days and weeks, supported by bard and butler, and all the apparel of princely festivity. He pitched his tents in the forest of Snowdon, by the shore of lake or torrent; and, after hunting all the day, he feasted half the night. The light of his torches gleamed on the foam of the cataracts, and the sound of harp and song was mingled with their midnight roar.

When not thus employed, he was either feasting in his Castle of Diganwy, on the Conway, or fighting with any of the neighbouring kings who had anything which he wanted, and which he thought himself strong enough to take from them.

Once, towards the close of autumn, he carried the tumult of the chace into the recesses of Meirion. The consonance, or dissonance, of men and dogs, outpealed the noise of the torrents among the rocks and woods of the Mawddach. Elphin and Teithrin were gone after the sheep or goats in the mountains; Taliesin was absent on the borders of his favourite lake; Angharad and Melanghel were alone. The careful mother, alarmed at the unusual din, and knowing, by rumour, of what materials the Nimrods of Britain were made, fled, with her daughter and handmaids, to the refuge of a deeply-secluded cavern, which they had long before noted as a safe retreat from peril. As they ascended the hills that led to the cavern, they looked back, at intervals, through the openings of the woods, to the growing tumult on the opposite side of the valley. The wild goats were first seen, flying in all directions, taking prodigious leaps from crag to crag, now and then facing about, and rearing themselves on their hind legs, as if in act to butt, and immediately thinking better of it, and springing away on all fours among the trees. Next the more rare spectacle of a noble stag presented itself on th summit of a projecting rock, pausing a moment to snuff th air, then bounding down the most practicable slope to t' valley. Next, on the summit which the stag had just deserte appeared a solitary huntsman, sitting on a prancing horse, a waking a hundred echoes with the blast of his horn. N

rushed into view the main body of the royal company, and the two-legged and four-legged avalanche came thundering down on the track of the flying prey, not without imminent hazard of broken necks; though the mountain-bred horses, which possessed by nature almost the surefootedness of mules, had finished their education under the first professors of the age.

The stag swam the river, and stood at bay before the dwelling of Elphin, where he was in due time despatched by the conjoint valour of dog and man. The royal train burst into the solitary dwelling, where, finding nothing worthy of much note, excepting a large store of salt salmon and mead, they proceeded to broil and tap, and made fearful havoc among the family's winter provision. Elphin and Teithrin, returning to their expected dinner, stood aghast on the threshold of their plundered sanctuary. Maelgon condescended to ask them who they were; and, learning Elphin's name and quality, felt himself bound to return his involuntary hospitality by inviting him to Diganwy. So strong was his sense of justice on this head, that, on Elphin's declining the invitation, which Maelgon ascribed to modesty, he desired two of his grooms to take him up and carry him off.

So Elphin was impressed into royal favour, and was feasted munificently in the castle of Diganwy. Teithrin brought home the ladies from the cavern, and, during the absence of Elphin, looked after the sheep and goats, and did his master's business as well as his own.

One evening, when the royal "nowle" was "tottie of the must," while the bards of Maelgon were singing the praises of their master, and of all and everything that belonged to him, as the most eximious and transcendent persons and things of the superficial garniture of the earth, Maelgon said to Elphin, "My bards say that I am the best and bravest of kings, that my queen is the most beautiful and chaste of women, and that they themselves, by virtue of belonging to me, are the best and wisest of bards. Now what say you, on these heads?"

This was a perplexing question to Elphin, who, nevertheless, answered: "That you are the best and bravest of kings I do not in the least doubt; yet I cannot think that any woman surpasses my own wife in beauty and chastity, or that any bard equals my bard in genius and wisdom."

"Hear you him, Rhûn?" said Maelgon.

"I hear," said Rhûn, "and mark."

Rhûn was the son of Maelgon, and a worthy heir-apparent of his illustrious sire. Rhûn set out the next morning on an embassy very similar to Tarquin's, accompanied by only one attendant. They lost their way and each other, among the forests of Meirion. The attendant, after riding about some time in great trepidation, thought he heard the sound of a harp, mixed with the roar of the torrents, and following its indications, came at length within sight of an oak-fringed precipice, on the summit of which stood Taliesin, playing and singing to the winds and waters. The attendant could not approach him without dismounting; therefore, tying his horse to a branch, he ascended the rock, and, addressing the young bard, inquired his way to the dwelling of Elphin. Taliesin, in return, inquired his business there; and, partly by examination, partly by divination, ascertained his master's name, and the purport of his visit.

Taliesin deposited his harp in a dry cavern of the rock, and undertook to be the stranger's guide. The attendant remounted his horse, and Taliesin preceded him on foot. But the way by which he led him grew more and more rugged, till the stranger called out, "Whither lead you, my friend? My horse can no longer keep his footing." "There is no other way," said Taliesin. "But give him to my management, and do you follow on foot." The attendant consented. Taliesin mounted the horse, and presently struck into a more practicable track; and immediately giving the horse the reins, he disappeared among the woods, leaving the unfortunate equerry to follow as he might, with no better guide than the uncertain recollection of the sound of his horse's heels.

Taliesin reached home before the arrival of Rhûn, and warned Angharad of the mischief that was designed her.

Rhûn, arriving at his destination, found only a housemaid dressed as Angharad, and another officiating as her attendant. The fictitious princess gave him a supper, and everything else he asked for; and, at parting in the morning, a lock of her hair, and a ring which Angharad had placed on her finger.

After riding a short distance on his return, Rhûn met his unlucky attendant, torn, tired, and half-starved, and cursing some villain who had stolen his horse. Rhûn was too happy in his own success to have a grain of sympathy for his miser-

able follower, whom he left to find his horse and his way, or either, or neither, as he might, and returned alone to Diganwy.

Maelgon exultingly laid before Elphin the proofs of his wife's infidelity. Elphin examined the lock of hair, and listened to the narration of Rhûn. He divined at once the trick that had been put upon the prince; but he contented himself with saying, "I do not believe that Rhûn has received the favours of Angharad; and I still think that no wife in Britain, not even the queen of Maelgon Gwyneth, is more chaste or more beautiful than mine."

Hereupon Maelgin waxed wroth. Elphin, in a point which much concerned him, held a belief of his own different from that which his superiors in worldly power required him to hold. Therefore Maelgon acted as the possessors of worldly power usually act in similar cases: he locked Elphin up within four stone walls, with an intimation that he should keep him there till he pronounced a more orthodox opinion on the question in dispute.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LOVE OF MELANGHEL.

Αλλὰ τεαῖς παλάμησι μαχήμονα θύρσον ἀείρων,
Αἰθέρος ἄξια ῥέξον· ἐπεὶ Διὸς ἄμβροτος αὐλὴ
Οὔ σε πόνων ἀπάνευθε δεδέξεται· οὐδέ σοι Ὧραι
Μήπω ἀεθλεύσαντι πύλας πετάσωσιν Ὀλύμπου.

Grasp the bold thyrsus; seek the field's array;
And do things worthy of ethereal day:
Not without toil to earthborn man befalls
To tread the floors of Jove's immortal halls:
Never to him, who not by deeds has striven,
Will the bright Hours roll back the gates of heaven.

IRIS TO BACCHUS, *in the 13th Book of the* DIONYSIACA OF NONNUS.

THE household of Elphin was sufficiently improsperous during the absence of its chief. The havoc which Maelgon's visitation had made in their winter provision, it required the utmost exertions of their collective energies to repair. Even the young Princess Melanghel sallied

forth, in the garb of a huntress, to strike the deer, or the wild goat, among the wintry forests, on the summits of the bleak crags, or in the valleys of the flooded streams.

Taliesin, on these occasions, laid aside his harp, and the robe of his order, and accompanied the princess with his hunting-spear, and more succinctly apparelled.

Their retinue, it may be supposed, was neither very numerous nor royal, nor their dogs very thoroughbred. It sometimes happened that the deer went one way, the dogs another; the attendants, losing sight of both, went a third, leaving Taliesin, who never lost sight of Melanghel, alone with her among the hills.

One day, the ardour of the chase having carried them far beyond their ordinary bounds, they stood alone together on Craig Aderyn, the Rock of Birds, which overlooks the river Dysyni. This rock takes its name from the flock of birds which have made it their dwelling, and which make the air resonant with their multitudinous notes. Around, before, and above them, rose mountain beyond mountain, soaring above the leafless forests, to lose their heads in mist; beneath them lay the silent river, and along the opening of its narrow valley, they looked to the not-distant sea.

"Prince Llywarch," said Taliesin, "is a bard and a warrior: he is the son of an illustrious line. Taliesin is neither prince nor warrior: he is the unknown child of the waters."

"Why think you of Llywarch?" said Melanghel, to whom the name of the prince was known only from Taliesin, who knew it only from fame.

"Because," said Taliesin, "there is that in my soul which tells me that I shall have no rival among the bards of Britain: but if the princes and warriors seek the love of Melanghel, I shall know that I am but a bard, and not as Llywarch."

"You would be Prince Taliesin," said Melanghel, smiling "to make me your princess? Am I not a princess already and such an one as is not on earth, for the land of my inheritance is under the sea, under those very waves that now r within our view; and, in truth, you are as well qualified a prince as I am for a princess, and have about as valuab dominion in the mists and the clouds as I have under waters."

Her eye sparkled with affectionate playfulness, whil long black hair floated loosely in the breeze that press

folds of her drapery against the matchless symmetry of her form.

"Oh, maid!" said Taliesin, "what shall I do to win your love?"

"Restore me my father," said Melanghel, with a seriousness as winning as her playfulness had been fascinating.

"That will I do," said Taliesin, "for his own sake. What shall I do for yours?"

"Nothing more," said Melanghel, and she held out her hand to the youthful bard. Taliesin seized it with rapture, and pressed it to his lips; then, still grasping her hand, and throwing his left arm round her, he pressed his lips to hers.

Melanghel started from him, blushing, and looked at him a moment with something like severity; but he blushed as much as she did, and seemed even more alarmed at her displeasure than she was at his momentary audacity. She reassured him with a smile; and, pointing her spear in the direction of her distant home, she bounded before him down the rock.

This was the kiss of Taliesin to the daughter of Elphin, which is celebrated in an inedited triad, as one of "the Three Chaste Kisses of the island of Britain."

CHAPTER IX.

THE SONGS OF DIGANWY.

Three things that will always swallow, and never be satisfied: the sea; a burial ground; and a king.—TRIADS OF WISDOM.

THE hall of Maelgon Gwyneth was ringing with music and revelry, when Taliesin stood on the floor, with his harp, in the midst of the assembly, and, without introduction or preface, struck a few chords, that, as if by magic, suspended all other sounds, and fixed the attention of all in silent expectation. He then sang as follows:

CANU Y MEDD.

THE MEAD SONG OF TALIESIN.

The King of kings upholds the heaven,
And parts from earth the billowy sea:

By Him all earthly joys are given ;
He loves the just, and guards the free.
Round the wide hall, for thine and thee,
With purest draughts the mead-horns foam,
Maelgon of Gwyneth ! Can it be
That here a prince bewails his home ?

The bee tastes not the sparkling draught
Which mortals from his toils obtain ;
That sends, in festal circles quaffed,
Sweet tumult through the heart and brain.
The timid, while the horn they drain,
Grow bold ; the happy more rejoice ;
The mourner ceases to complain ;
The gifted bard exalts his voice.

To royal Elphin life I owe,
Nurture and name, the harp, and mead :
Full, pure, and sparkling be their flow,
The horns to Maelgon's lips decreed :
For him may horn to horn succeed,
Till, glowing with their generous fire,
He bid the captive chief be freed,
Whom at his hands my songs require.

Elphin has given me store of mead,
Mead, ale, and wine, and fish, and corn ;
A happy home ; a splendid steed,
Which stately trappings well adorn.
To-morrow be the auspicious morn
That home the expected chief shall lead ;
So may King Maelgon drain the horn
In thrice three million feasts of mead.

"I give you," said Maelgon, "all the rights of hospitality, and as many horns as you please of the mead you so well and justly extol. If you be Elphin's bard, it must be confessed he spoke truth with respect to you, for you are a much better bard than any of mine, as they are all free to confess : I give them that liberty."

The bards availed themselves of the royal indulgence, and confessed their own inferiority to Taliesin, as the king had commanded them to do. Whether they were all as well convinced of it as they professed to be, may be left to the decision of that very large class of literary gentlemen who are in the habit of favouring the reading public with their undisguised opinions.

"But," said Maelgon, "your hero of Caredigion indulged himself in a very unjustifiable bravado with respect to his queen ; for he said she was as beautiful and as chaste as mine.

Now Rhûn has [illegible] brought away [illegible] sists in his [illegible] queen of Gwyneth [illegible] will do, till he make [illegible]

"That he will [illegible] ceived only the [illegible] stratagem, to [illegible] Angharad was [illegible]

Taliesin explained [illegible] an eulogium on [illegible] a towering passion.

Rhûn secretly [illegible] and Maelgon swore by his [illegible] till doomsday. Taliesin [illegible] of deep but subdued feeling [illegible]

SONG OF THE WIND.*

The winds that wander far and free,
Bring whispers from the shores they sweep;
Voices of feast and revelry;
Murmurs of forests and the deep;

Low sounds of torrents from the steep
Descending on the flooded vale;
And tumults from the leagured keep,
Where foes the dizzy rampart scale.

The whispers of the wandering wind
Are borne to gifted ears alone;
For them it ranges unconfined,
And speaks in accents of its own.

It tells me of Deheubarth's throne;
The spider weaves not in its shield: †
Already from its towers is blown
The blast that bids the spoiler yield.

* This poem has little or nothing of Taliesin's Canu y Gwynt, with the exception of the title. That poem is apparently a fragment; and, as it now stands, is an incoherent and scarcely-intelligible rhapsody. It contains no distinct or explicit idea, except the proposition that it is an unsafe booty to carry off fat kine, which may be easily conceded in a case where nimbleness of heel, both in man and beast, must have been of great importance. The idea from which, if from anything in the existing portion of the poem, it takes its name, that the whispers of the wind bring rumours of war from Deheubarth, is rather implied than expressed.

† The spider weaving in suspended armour, is an old emblem of peace and inaction. Thus Bacchylides, in his fragment on Peace:

Ill with his prey the fox may wend,
When the young lion quits his lair:
Sharp sword, strong shield, stout arm, should tend
On spirits that unjustly dare.

To me the wandering breezes bear
The war-blast from Caer Lleon's brow;
The avenging storm is brooding there
To which Diganwy's towers shall bow.

"If the wind talks to you," said Maelgon, "I may say, with the proverb, you talk to the wind; for I am not to be sung, or cajoled, or vapored, or bullied out of my prisoner. And as to your war-blasts from Caer Lleon, which I construe into a threat that you will stir up King Arthur against me, I can tell you for your satisfaction, and to spare you the trouble of going so far, that he has enough to do with seeking his wife, who has been carried off by some unknown marauder, and with fighting the Saxons, to have much leisure or inclination to quarrel with a true Briton, who is one of his best friends, and his heir-presumptive; for, though he is a man of great prowess, and moreover, saving his reverence and your presence, a cuckold, he has not yet favoured his kingdom with an heir-apparent. And I request you to understand, that when I extolled you above my bards, I did so only in respect of your verse and voice, melody and execution, figure and action, in short, of your manner; for your matter is naught; and I must do my own bards the justice to say

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Ἐν δὲ σιδαροδέτοις πόρπαξιν
Αἰθὰν ἀραχνᾶν ἔργα πέλονται.

Euripides, in a fragment of Erectheus:

Κείσθω δόρυ μοι μίτον αμφιπλέκειν
Ἀράχναις.

And Nonnus, whom no poetical image escaped (Dionysiaca, L. xxxviii.):

Οὐ φόνος, οὐ τότε δῆρις· ἔκειτο δὲ τηλόθι χάρμης
Βακχιὰς ἐξαέτηρος ἀραχνιόωσα βοείη.

And Beaumont and Fletcher, in the Wife for a Month:

"Would'st thou live so long, till thy sword hung by,
And lazy spiders filled the hilt with cobwebs?"

A Persian poet says, describing ruins:

"The spider spreads the veil in the palace of the Cæsars."

And among the most felicitous uses of this emblem, must never be forgotten Hogarth's cobweb over the lid of the charity-box.

that, however much they may fall short of you in the requisites aforesaid, they know much better than you do, what is fitting for bards to sing, and kings to hear."

The bards, thus encouraged, recovered from the first shock of Maelgon's ready admission of Taliesin's manifest superiority, and struck up a sort of consecutive chorus, in a series of pennillion, or stanzas, in praise of Maelgon and his heirship presumptive, giving him credit for all the virtues of which the reputation was then in fashion; and amongst the rest, they very loftily celebrated his justice and magnanimity.

Taliesin could not reconcile his notions of these qualities with Maelgon's treatment of Elphin. He changed his measure and his melody, and pronounced, in impassioned numbers, the poem, which a learned Welsh historian calls "The Indignation of the Bards," though, as the indignation was Taliesin's, and not theirs, he seems to have made a small mistake in regard to the preposition.

THE INDIGNATION OF TALIESIN WITH THE BARDS OF MAELGON GWYNETH.

False bards the sacred fire pervert,
Whose songs are won without desert;
Who falsehoods weave in specious lays,
To gild the base with virtue's praise.

From court to court, from tower to tower,
In warrior's tent, in lady's bower,
For gold, for wine, for food, for fire,
They tune their throats at all men's hire.

Their harps re-echo wide and far
With sensual love, and bloody war,
And drunkenness, and flattering lies:
Truth's light may shine for other eyes.

In palaces they still are found,
At feasts, promoting senseless sound:
He is their demigod at least,
Whose only virtue is his feast.

They love to talk; they hate to think;
All day they sing; all night they drink:
No useful toils their hands employ;
In boisterous throngs is all their joy.

The bird will fly, the fish will swim,
The bee the honied flowers will skim;
Its food by toil each creature brings,
Except false bards and worthless kings.

Learning and wisdom claim to find
Homage and succour from mankind;
But learning's right, and wisdom's due,
Are falsely claimed by slaves like you.

True bards know truth, and truth will show;
Ye know it not, nor care to know:
Your king's weak mind false judgment warps;
Rebuke his wrong, or break your harps:

I know the mountain and the plain;
I know where right and justice reign;
I from the tower will Elphin free;
Your king shall learn his doom from me.

A spectre of the marsh shall rise,
With yellow teeth, and hair, and eyes
From whom your king in vain aloof
Shall crouch beneath the sacred roof.

He through the half-closed door shall spy
The Yellow Spectre sweeping by;
To whom the punishment belongs
Of Maelgon's crimes and Elphin's wrongs.

By the name of the Yellow Spectre, Taliesin designated a pestilence, which afterwards carried off great multitudes of the people, and, amongst them, Maelgon Gwyneth, then sovereign of Britain, who had taken refuge from it in a church.

Maelgon paid little attention to Taliesin's prophecy, but he was much incensed by the general tenor of his song.

"If it were not," said Maelgon, "that I do not choose to add to the number of the crimes of which you so readily accuse me, that of disregarding the inviolability of your bardship, I would send you to keep company with your trout-catching king, and you might amuse his salmon-salting majesty with telling him as much truth as he is disposed to listen to; which, to judge by his reception of Rhûn's story of his wife, I take to be exceedingly little. For the present, you are welcome to depart; and, if you are going to Caer Lleqn, you may present my respects to King Arthur, and tell him, I hope he will beat the Saxons, and find his wife; but I hope, also, that the cutting me off with an heir-apparent will not be the consequence of his finding her, or (which, by-the-by, is more likely) of his having lost her."

Taliesin took his departure from the hall of Diganwy, leaving the bards biting their lips at his rebuke, and Maelgon roaring with laughter at his own very excellent jest.

CHAPTER X.

THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF RHUN.

Παρθένε, πῶς μετάμειψας ἐρευθαλέην σέο μορφήν;
Εἰαρινὴν ὀλκτῖνα τίς ἔσβεσε σεῖο προσώπου;
Οὐκέτι σῶν μελέων ἁμαρύσσεται ἀργυφος αἴγλη·
Οὐκέτι ὡς τὸ πρώην, τεαὶ γ-λώσσιν ὀπωπαί.

Sweet maid, what grief has changed thy roseate grace,
And quenched the vernal sunshine of thy face?
No more thy light form sparkles as it flies,
Nor laughter flashes from thy radiant eyes.

VENUS TO PASITHEA, *in the 33d Book of the* DIONYSIACA OF NONNUS.

TALIESIN returned to the dwelling of Elphin, auguring that, in consequence of his information, Rhûn would pay it another visit. In this anticipation he was not mistaken, for Rhûn very soon appeared, with a numerous retinue, determined, apparently, to carry his point by force of arms. He found, however, no inmate in the dwelling but Taliesin and Teithrin ap Tathral.

Rhûn stormed, entreated, promised, and menaced, without success. He perlustrated the vicinity, and found various caverns, but not the one he sought. He passed many days in the search, and, finally, departed; but, at a short distance, he dismissed all his retinue, except his bard of all work, or laureate expectant, and accompanied by this worthy, returned to the banks of the Mawddach, where they resolved themselves into an ambuscade. It was not long before they saw Taliesin issue from the dwelling, and begin ascending the hill. They followed him, at a cautious distance; first up a steep ascent of the forest-covered rocks; then along a small space of densely-wooded tableland to the end of a dingle; and, again, by a slight descent, to the bed of a mountain stream, in a spot where the torrent flung itself, in a series of cataracts, down the rift of a precipitous rock, that towered high above their heads. About half way up the rock, near the base of one of these cataracts, was a projecting ledge, or natural platform of rock, behind which was seen the summit of the opening of a cave. Taliesin paused and looked around him, as if to ascertain that he was unobserved; and then, standing on a projection of the rock below, he mingled, in

spontaneous song, the full power of his voice with the roar of the waters.

TALIESIN.

Maid of the rock ! though loud the flood,
My voice will pierce thy cell :
No foe is in the mountain wood,
No danger in the dell :
The torrents bound along the glade ;
Their path is free and bright ;
Be thou as they, oh mountain maid !
In liberty and light.

Melanghel appeared on the rocky platform, and answered to the song of her lover :

MELANGHEL.

The cataracts thunder down the steep;
The woods all lonely wave :
Within my heart thy voice sinks deep
That calls me from my cave.
The voice is dear, the song is sweet,
And true the words must be :
Well pleased I quit the dark retreat,
To wend away with thee.

TALIESIN.

Not yet ; not yet ; let nightdews fall,
And stars be bright above,
Ere to her long deserted hall
I guide my gentle love.
When torchlight flashes on the roof,
No foe will near thee stray.
Even now his parting courser's hoof
Rings from the rocky way.

MELANGHEL.

Yet climb the path and comfort speak,
To cheer the lonely cave,
Where woods are bare, and rocks are bleak,
And wintry torrents rave.
A dearer home my memory knows,
A home I still deplore ;
Where firelight glows, while winds and snows
Assail the guardian door.

Taliesin vanished a moment from the sight of Rhûn, and almost immediately reappeared by the side of Melanghel, who had now been joined by her mother. In a few minutes she returned, and Angharad and Melanghel withdrew.

Rhûn watched him from the dingle, and then proceeded to investigate the path by which he had gained the platform. After some search, he discovered it, ascended the platform, and rushed into the cavern.

They here found a blazing fire, a half-finished dinner, materials of spinning and embroidering, and other signs of female inhabitancy; but they found not the inhabitants. They searched the cavern to its depth, which was not inconsiderable, much marvelling how the ladies had vanished. While thus engaged, they heard a rushing sound, and a crash on the rocks, as of some ponderous body. The mystery of this noise was very soon explained to them, in a manner that gave an unusual length to their faces, and threw a deep tinge of blue into their rosy complexions. A ponderous stone, which had been suspended like a portcullis at the mouth of the cavern, had been dropped by some unseen agency, and made them as close prisoners as Elphin.

They were not long kept in suspense as to how this matter had been managed. The hoarse voice of Teithrin ap Tathral sounded in their ears from without, "Foxes, you have been seen through, and you are fairly trapped. Eat and drink. You shall want nothing but to get out; which you must want some time; for it is sworn that no hand but Elphin's shall raise the stone of your captivity."

"Let me out," vociferated Rhûn, "and on the word of a prince——" But before he could finish the sentence, the retreating steps of Teithrin were lost in the roar of the torrent.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HEROES OF DINAS VAWR.

L'ombra sua torna ch'era dipartita.—DANTE.
While there is life there is hope.—*English Proverb.*

PRINCE RHUN being safe in schistous bastile, Taliesin commenced his journey to the court of King Arthur. On his way to Caer Lleon, he was received with all hospitality, entertained with all admiration, and dismissed with all honour, at the castles of several petty kings, and,

amongst the rest, at the castle of Dinas Vawr, on the Towy, which was then garrisoned by King Melvas, who had marched with a great force out of his own kingdom, on the eastern shores of the Severn, to levy contributions in the country to the westward, where, as the pleasure of his company had been altogether unlooked for, he had got possession of a good portion of movable property. The castle of Dinas Vawr presenting itself to him as a convenient hold, he had taken it by storm; and having cut the throats of the former occupants, thrown their bodies into the Towy, and caused a mass to be sung for the good of their souls, he was now sitting over his bowl with the comfort of a good conscience, enjoying the fruits of the skill and courage with which he had planned and accomplished his scheme of ways and means for the year.

The hall of Melvas was full of magnanimous heroes, who were celebrating their own exploits in sundry choruses, especially in that which follows, which is here put upon record as being the quintessence of all the war-songs that ever were written, and the sum and substance of all the appetencies, tendencies, and consequences of military glory:

THE WAR-SONG OF DINAS VAWR.

The mountain sheep are sweeter,
But the valley sheep are fatter;
We therefore deemed it meeter
To carry off the latter.
We made an expedition;
We met an host and quelled it;
We forced a strong position,
And killed the men who held it.

On Dyfed's richest valley,
Where herds of kine were browsing,
We made a mighty sally,
To furnish our carousing.
Fierce warriors rushed to meet us;
We met them, and o'erthrew them:
They struggled hard to beat us;
But we conquered them, and slew them.

As we drove our prize at leisure,
The king marched forth to catch us:
His rage surpassed all measure,
But his people could not match us.
He fled to his hall-pillars;
And, ere our force we led off,
Some sacked his house and cellars,
While others cut his head off.

We there, in strife bewildering,
Spilt blood enough to swim in.
We orphaned many children,
And widowed many women.
The eagles and the ravens
We glutted with our foemen;
The heroes and the cravens,
The spearmen and the bowmen.

We brought away from battle,
And much their land bemoaned them,
Two thousand head of cattle,
And the head of him who owned them:
Ednyfed, King of Dyfed.
His head was borne before us;
His wine and beasts supplied our feasts,
And his overthrow, our chorus.

As the doughty followers of Melvas, having sung themselves hoarse with their own praises, subsided one by one into drunken sleep, Taliesin, sitting near the great central fire, and throwing around a scrutinizing glance on all the objects in the hall, noticed a portly and somewhat elderly personage, of an aspect that would have been venerable, if it had been less rubicund and Bacchic, who continued plying his potations with undiminished energy, while the heroes of the festival dropped round him, like the leaves of autumn. This figure excited Taliesin's curiosity. The features struck him with a sense of resemblance to objects which had been somewhere familiar to him; but he perplexed himself in vain, with attempts at definite recollections. At length, when these two were almost the sole survivors of the evening, the stranger approached him with a golden goblet, which he had just replenished with the choicest wine of the vaults of Dinas Vawr, and pronounced the oracular monosyllable, "Drink!" to which he subjoined emphatically, "GWIN O EUR: Wine from gold. That is my taste. Ale is well; mead is better; wine is best. Horn is well; silver is better; gold is best."

Taliesin, who had been very abstemious during the evening, took a golden goblet and drank, to please the inviter, in the hope that he would become communicative, and satisfy the curiosity his appearance had raised.

The stranger sat down near him, evidently in that amiable state of semi-intoxication which inflates the head, warms the heart, lifts up the veil of the inward man, and sets the tongue

flying, or rather tripping, in the double sense of nimbleness and titubancy.

The stranger repeated, taking a copious draught, "My taste is wine from gold."

"I have heard those words," said Taliesin, "GWIN O EUR, repeated as having been the favourite saying of a person whose memory is fondly cherished by one as dear to me as a mother, though his name, with all others, is the by-word of all that is disreputable."

"I cannot believe," said the stranger, "that a man whose favourite saying was GWIN O EUR could possibly be a disreputable person, or deserve any other than that honourable remembrance which you say only one person is honest enough to entertain for him."

"His name," said Taliesin, "is too unhappily notorious throughout Britain by the terrible catastrophe of which his 'Gwin o eur' was the cause."

"And what might that be?" said the stranger.

"The inundation of Gwaelod," said Taliesin.

"You speak, then," said the stranger, taking an enormous potation, "of Seithenyn, Prince Seithenyn, Seithenyn ap Seithin Saidi, Arglwyd Gorwarcheidwad yr Argae Breninawl."

"I seldom hear his name," said Taliesin, "with any of those sounding additions; he is usually called Seithenyn the Drunkard."

The stranger goggled about his eyes in an attempt to fix them steadily on Taliesin, screwed up the corners of his mouth, stuck out his nether lip, pursed up his chin, thrust forward his right foot, and elevated his golden goblet in his right hand; then, in a tone which he intended to be strongly becoming of his impressive accent and imposing attitude, he muttered, "Look at me!"

Taliesin looked at him accordingly, with as much gravity as he could preserve.

After a silence, which he designed to be very dignified and solemn, the stranger spoke again: "I am the man."

"What man?" said Taliesin.

"The man," replied his entertainer, "of whom you have spoken so disparagingly; Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi."

"Seithenyn," said Taliesin, "has slept twenty years under

the waters of the western sea, as King Gwythno's Lamentations have made known to all Britain."

"They have not made it known to me," said Seithenyn, "for the best of all reasons, that one can only know the truth; for, if that which we think we know is not truth, it is something which we do not know. A man cannot know his own death; for, while he knows anything he is alive; at least, I never heard of a dead man who knew anything, or pretended to know anything: if he had so pretended, I should have told him to his face he was no dead man."

"Your mode of reasoning," said Taliesin, "unquestionably corresponds with what I have heard of Seithenyn's: but how is it possible Seithenyn can be living?"

"Everything that is, is possible, says Cato the Wise," answered Seithenyn, with a look of great sapience. "I will give you proof that I am not a dead man; for, they say dead men tell no tales: now, I will tell you a tale, and a very interesting one it is. When I saw the sea sapping the tower, I jumped into the water, and just in the nick of time. It was well for me that I had been so provident as to empty so many barrels, and that somebody, I don't know who, but I suppose it was my daughter, had been so provident as to put the bungs into them, to keep them sweet; for the beauty of it was that, when there was so much water in the cask, it kept them empty; and when I jumped into the sea, the sea was just making a great hole in the cellar, and they were floating out by dozens. I don't know how I managed it, but I got one arm over one, and the other arm over another: I nipped them pretty tight; and though my legs were under water, the good liquor I had in me kept me warm. I could not help thinking—as I had nothing else to think of just then that touched me so nearly—that if I had left them full, and myself empty, as a sober man would have done, we should all three—that is, I and the two barrels, have gone to the bottom together, that is to say, separately; for we should never have come together, except at the bottom, perhaps, when no one of us could have done the other any good; whereas they have done me much good, and I have requited it; for, first, I did them the service of emptying them; and then they did me the service of floating me with the tide, whether the ebb, or the flow, or both, is more than I can tell, down to the coast of Dyfed, where I was picked up by fishermen; and such was

my sense of gratitude that, though I had always before detested an empty barrel, except as a trophy, I swore I would not budge from the water unless my two barrels went with me; so we were all marched inland together, and were taken into the service of King Ednyfed, where I stayed till his castle was sacked, and his head cut off, and his beeves marched away with, by the followers of King Melvas, of whom I killed two or three; but they were too many for us: therefore, to make the best of a bad bargain, I followed leisurely in the train of the beeves, and presented myself to King Melvas, with this golden goblet, saying, 'Gwin o eur.' He was struck with my deportment, and made me his chief butler; and now my two barrels are the two pillars of his cellar, where I regularly fill them from affection, and as regularly empty them from gratitude, taking care to put the bungs in them, to keep them sweet."

"But all this while," said Taliesin, "did you never look back to the Plain of Gwaelod, to your old king, and, above all, to your daughter?"

"Why yes," said Seithenyn, "I did in a way! But as to the Plain of Gwaelod, that was gone, buried under the sea, along with many good barrels, which I had been improvident enough to leave full: then, as to the old king, though I had a great regard for him, I thought he might be less likely to feast me in his hall, than to set up my head on a spike over his gate: then, as to my daughter—"

Here he shook his head, and looked maudlin; and dashing two or three drops from his eye, he put a great many into his mouth.

"Your daughter," said Taliesin, "is the wife of King Elphin, and has a daughter, who is now as beautiful as her mother was."

"Very likely," said Seithenyn, "and I should be very glad to see them all; but I am afraid King Elphin, as you call him, (what he is king of, you shall tell me at leisure,) would do me a mischief. At any rate, he would stint me in liquor. No! If they will visit me, here I am. Fish, and water, will not agree with me. I am growing old, and need cordial nutriment. King Melvas will never want for beeves and wine; nor, indeed, for anything else that is good. I can tell you what," he added, in a very low voice, cocking his eye, and putting his finger on his lips, "he has got in this very castle the finest woman in Britain."

"That I doubt," said Tallesin.

"She is the greatest, at any rate," said Seithenyn, "and ought to be the finest."

"How the greatest?" said Tallesin.

Seithenyn looked round, to observe if there were any listener near, and fixed a very suspicious gaze on a rotund figure of a fallen hero, who lay coiled up like a maggot in a filbert, and snoring with an energy that, to the muddy apprehensions of Seithenyn, seemed to be counterfeit. He determined, by a gentle experiment, to ascertain if his suspicions were well founded; and proceeded, with what he thought great caution, to apply the point of his foot to the most bulging portion of the fat sleeper's circumference. But he greatly miscalculated his intended impetus, for he impinged his foot with a force that overbalanced himself, and hurled him headlong over his man, who instantly sprang on his legs, shouting "To arms!" Numbers started up at the cry; the hall rang with the din of arms, and with the vociferation of questions, which there were many to ask, and none to answer. Some stared about for the enemy; some rushed to the gates; others to the walls. Two or three, reeling in the tumult and the darkness, were jostled over the parapet, and went rolling down the precipitous slope of the castle hill, crashing through the bushes, and bellowing for some one to stop them, till their clamours were cut short by a plunge into the Towy, where the conjoint weight of their armour and their liquor carried them at once to the bottom. The rage which would have fallen on the enemy, if there had been one, was turned against the author of the false alarm: but, as none could point him out, the tumult subsided by degrees, through a descending scale of imprecations, into the last murmured malediction of him whom the intensity of his generous anger kept longest awake. By this time, the rotund hero had again coiled himself up into his ring; and Seithenyn was stretched in a right line, as a tangent to the circle, in a state of utter incapacity to elucidate the mystery of King Melvas's possession of the finest woman in Britain.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SPLENDOUR OF CAER LLEON.

The three principal cities of the isle of Britain: Caer Llion upon Wysg in Cymru; Caer Llundain in Lloegr; and Caer Evrawg in Deifr and Brynaich.*—*Triads of the isle of Britain.*

THE sunset of a bright December day was glittering on the waves of the Usk, and on the innumerable roofs, which, being composed chiefly of the glazed tiles of the Romans, reflected the light almost as vividly as the river; when Taliesin descended one of the hills that border the beautiful valley in which then stood Caer Lleon, the metropolis of Britain, and in which now stands, on a small portion of the selfsame space, a little insignificant town, possessing nothing of its ancient glory but the unaltered name of Caer Lleon.

The rapid Usk flowed then, as now, under the walls: the high wooden bridge, with its slender piles, was then much the same as it is at this day: it seems to have been never regularly rebuilt, but to have been repaired, from time to time, on the original Roman model. The same green and fertile meadows, the same gently-sloping wood-covered hills, that now meet the eye of the tourist, then met the eye of Taliesin; except that the woods on one side of the valley, were then only the skirts of an extensive forest, which the nobility and beauty of Caer Lleon made frequently re-echo to the clamours of the chase.

The city, which had been so long the centre of the Roman supremacy, which was now the seat of the most illustrious sovereign that had yet held the sceptre of Britain, could not be approached by the youthful bard, whose genius was destined to eclipse that of all his countrymen, without feelings and reflections of deep interest. The sentimental tourist, (who, perching himself on an old wall, works himself up into a soliloquy of philosophical pathos, on the vicissitudes of empire and the mutability of all sublunary things, interrupted only by an occasional peep at his watch, to ensure his not over-

* Caer Lleon upon Usk in Cambria: London in Loegria: and York in Deïra and Bernicia

staying the minute at which his fowl, comfortably roasting at the nearest inn, has been promised to be ready,) has, no doubt, many fine thoughts well worth recording in a dapper volume; but Taliesin had an interest in the objects before him too deep to have a thought to spare, even for his dinner. The monuments of Roman magnificence, and of Roman domination, still existing in comparative freshness; the arduous struggle, in which his countrymen were then engaged with the Saxons, and which, notwithstanding the actual triumphs of Arthur, Taliesin's prophetic spirit told him would end in their being dispossessed of all the land of Britain, except the wild region of Wales, (a result which political sagacity might have apprehended from their disunion, but which, as he told it to his countrymen in that memorable prophecy which every child of the Cymry knows, has established for him, among them, the fame of a prophet;) the importance to himself and his benefactors of the objects of his visit to the city, on the result of which depended the liberation of Elphin, and the success of his love for Melanghel; the degree in which these objects might be promoted by the construction he had put on Seithenyn's imperfect communication respecting the lady in Dinas Vawr; furnished, altogether, more materials for absorbing thought, than the most zealous peregrinator, even if he be at once poet, antiquary, and philosopher, is likely to have at once in his mind, on the top of the finest old wall on the face of the earth.

Taliesin passed, in deep musing, through the gates of Caer Lleon; but his attention was speedily drawn to the objects around him. From the wild solitudes in which he had passed his earlier years, the transition to the castles and cities he had already visited, furnished much food to curiosity: but the ideas of them sunk into comparative nothingness before the magnificence of Caer Lleon.

He did not stop in the gateway to consider the knotty question, which has since puzzled so many antiquaries, whether the name of Caer Lleon signifies the City of Streams, the City of Legions, or the City of King Lleon? He saw a river filled with ships, flowing through fine meadows, bordered by hills and forests; walls of brick, as well as of stone; a castle, of impregnable strength; stately houses, of the most admirable architecture; palaces, with glided roofs; Roman temples, and Christian churches; a theatre, and an amphitheatre. The

public and private buildings of the departed Romans were in excellent preservation; though the buildings, and especially the temples, were no longer appropriated to their original purposes. The king's butler, Bedwyr, had taken possession of the Temple of Diana, as a cool place of deposit for wine: he had recently effected a stowage of vast quantities therein, and had made a most luminous arrangement of the several kinds; under the judicious and experienced superintendence of Dyvrig, the Ex-Archbishop of Caer Lleon; who had just then nothing else to do, having recently resigned his see in favour of King Arthur's uncle, David, who is, to this day, illustrious as the St. David in whose honour the Welshmen annually adorn their hats with a leek. This David was a very respectable character in his way: he was a man of great sanctity and simplicity; and, in order to eschew the vanities of the world, which were continually present to him in Caer Lleon, he removed the metropolitan see, from Caer Lleon, to the rocky, barren, woodless, streamless, meadowless, tempest-beaten point of Mynyw, which was afterwards called St. David's. He was the mirror and pattern of a godly life; teaching by example, as by precept; admirable in words, and excellent in deeds; tall in stature, handsome in aspect, noble in deportment, affable in address, eloquent and learned, a model to his followers, the life of the poor, the protector of widows, and the father of orphans. This makes altogether a very respectable saint; and it cannot be said, that the honourable leek is unworthily consecrated. A long series of his Catholic successors maintained, in great magnificence, a cathedral, a college, and a palace; keeping them all in repair, and feeding the poor into the bargain, from the archiepiscopal, or, when the primacy of Caer Lleon had merged in that of Canterbury, from the episcopal, revenues: but these things were reformed altogether by one of the first Protestant bishops, who, having a lady that longed for the gay world, and wanting more than all the revenues for himself and his family, first raised the wind by selling off the lead from the roof of his palace, and then obtained permission to remove from it, on the plea that it was not water-tight. The immediate successors of this bishop, whose name was Barlow, were in every way worthy of him; the palace and college have, consequently, fallen into incurable dilapidation, and the cathedral has fallen partially into ruins, and, most impartially, into neglect and *defacement*.

To return to Taliesin, in the streets of Caer Lleon. Plautus and Terence were not heard in the theatre, nor to be heard of in its neighbourhood; but it was thought an excellent place for an Eisteddfod, or Bardic Congress, and was made the principal place of assembly of the bards of the island of Britain. This is what Ross of Warwick means, when he says there was a noble university of students in Caer Lleon.

The mild precepts of the new religion had banished the ferocious sports to which the Romans had dedicated the amphitheatre, and, as Taliesin passed, it was pouring forth an improved and humanized multitude, who had been enjoying the pure British pleasure of baiting a bear.

The hot baths and aqueducts, the stoves of "wonderful artifice," as Giraldus has it, which diffused hot air through narrow spiracles, and many other wonders of the place, did not all present themselves to a first observation. The streets were thronged with people, especially of the fighting order, of whom a greater number flocked about Arthur than he always found it convenient to pay. Horsemen, with hawks and hounds, were returning from the neighbouring forest, accompanied by beautiful huntresses in scarlet and gold.

Taliesin, having perlustrated the city, proceeded to the palace of Arthur. At the gates he was challenged by a formidable guard, but passed by his bardic privilege. It was now very near Christmas, and when Taliesin entered the great hall it was blazing with artificial light, and glowing with the heat of the Roman stoves.

Arthur had returned victorious from the great battle of Badon Hill, in which he had slain with his own hand four hundred and forty Saxons; and was feasting as merrily as an honest man can be supposed to do while his wife is away. Kings, princes, and soldiers of fortune, bards and prelates, ladies superbly apparelled, and many of them surpassingly beautiful; and a most gallant array of handsome young cupbearers, marshalled and well drilled by the king's butler, Bedwyr, who was himself a petty king, were the chief components of the illustrious assembly.

Amongst the ladies were the beautiful Tegau Eurvron; Dywir, the Golden-haired; Enid, the daughter of Yniwl; Garwen, the daughter of Henyn; Gwyl, the daughter of Enddaud; and Indeg, the daughter of Avarwy Hir, of Maelienydd. Of these, Tegau Eurvron, or Tegau of the Golden Bosom, was

the wife of Caradoc, and one of the Three Chaste Wives of the island of Britain. She is the heroine who, as the lady of Sir Cradock, is distinguished above all the ladies of Arthur's court in the ballad of the Boy and the Mantle.

Amongst the bards were Prince Llywarch, then in his youth, afterwards called Llywarch Hên, or Llywarch the Aged; Aneurin, the British Homer, who sang the fatal battle of Cattraëth, which laid the foundation of the Saxon ascendency, in heroic numbers, which the gods have preserved to us, and who was called the Monarch of the Bards, before the days of the glory of Taliesin; and Merddin Gwillt, or Merlin the Wild, who was so deep in the secrets of nature, that he obtained the fame of a magician, to which he had at least as good a title as either Friar Bacon or Cornelius Agrippa.

Amongst the petty kings, princes, and soldiers of fortune, were twenty-four marchawg, or cavaliers, who were the counsellors and champions of Arthur's court. This was the heroic band, illustrious, in the songs of chivalry, as the Knights of the Round Table. Their names and pedigrees would make a very instructive and entertaining chapter; and would include the interesting characters of Gwalchmai ap Gwyar the Courteous, the nephew of Arthur; Caradoc, "Colofn Cymry," the Pillar of Cambria, whose lady, as above noticed, was the mirror of chastity; and Trystan ap Tallwch, the lover of the beautiful Essyllt, the daughter, or, according to some, the wife of his uncle March ap Meirchion; persons known to all the world, as Sir Gawain, Sir Cradock, and Sir Tristram.

On the right of King Arthur sate the beautiful Indeg, and on his left the lovely Garwen. Taliesin advanced, along the tesselated floor, towards the upper end of the hall, and, kneeling before King Arthur, said, "What boon will King Arthur grant to him who brings tidings of his wife?"

"Any boon," said Arthur, "that a king can give."

"Queen Gwenyvar," said Taliesin, "is the prisoner of King Melvas, in the castle of Dinas Vawr."

The mien and countenance of his informant satisfied the king that he knew what he was saying; therefore, without further parlance, he broke up the banquet, to make preparations for assailing Dinas Vawr.

But, before he began his march, King Melvas had shifted his quarters, and passed beyond the Severn to the isle of Avallon,

[redacted] the marshes and winter floods assured him some months of tranquillity and impunity.

King Arthur was highly exasperated, on receiving the intelligence of Medras's movement; but he had no remedy, and was reduced to the alternative of making the best of his Christmas with the ladies, princes, and bards who crowded his court.

The period of the winter solstice had been always a great feast with the northern nations, the commencement of the lengthening of the days being, indeed, of all points in the year of the year, that in which the inhabitants of cold climates have most cause to rejoice. This great festival was formerly called Yule; whether derived from the Gothic *Iola*, to make merry; or from the Celtic *Hiuol*, the sun; or from the Danish and Swedish *Hiul*, signifying wheel or revolution, December being *Hiul-month*, or the month of return; or from the Celtic word *Ol*, which has the important signification of [illegible] is a controversy to be settled here; but Yule had been long a great festival, with both Celts and Saxons; and with the change of religion, became the great festival of Christmas, retaining most of its ancient characteristics while England was Merry England; a phrase which must be a mystical puzzle to any one who looks for the first time on its present lugubrious inhabitants.

The mistletoe of the oak was gathered by the Druids with great ceremonies, as a symbol of the season. The mistletoe continued to be so gathered, and to be suspended in halls and kitchens, if not in temples, implying an unlimited privilege of kissing; which circumstance, probably, led a learned antiquary to opine that it was the forbidden fruit.

The Druids, at this festival, made, in a capacious cauldron, a mystical brewage of carefully selected ingredients, full of occult virtues, which they kept from the profane, and which was typical of the new year and of the transmigration of the soul. The profane, in humble imitation, brewed a bowl of spiced ale, or wine, throwing therein roasted crabs; the hissing of which, as they plunged, piping hot, into the liquor, was heard with much unction at midwinter, as typical of the conjunct benignant influences of fire and strong drink. The Saxons called this the Wassail-bowl, and the brewage of it is reported to have been one of the charms with which Rowena fascinated Voltigern.

King Arthur kept his Christmas so merrily, that the memory of it passed into a proverb:* "As merry as Christmas in Caer Lleon."

Caer Lleon was the merriest of places, and was commonly known by the name of Merry Caer Lleon; which the English ballad-makers, for the sake of the smoother sound, and confounding Cambria with Cumbria, most ignorantly or audaciously turned into Merry Carlisle; thereby emboldening a northern antiquary to set about proving that King Arthur was a Scotchman; according to the old principles of harry and foray, which gave Scotchmen a right to whatever they could find on the English border; though the English never admitted their title to anything there, excepting a halter in Carlisle.

The chase, in the neighbouring forest; tilting in the amphitheatre; trials of skill in archery, in throwing the lance and riding at the quintain, and similar amusements of the morning, created good appetites for the evening feasts; in which Prince Cei, who is well known as Sir Kay, the seneschal, superintended the viands, as King Bedwyr did the liquor: having each a thousand men at command, for their provision, arrangement, and distribution; and music worthy of the banquet was provided and superintended by the king's chief harper, Geraint, of whom a contemporary poet observes, that, when he died, the gates of heaven were thrown wide open, to welcome the ingress of so divine a musician.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GHOSTLINESS OF AVALLON.

Poco più, poco meno, tutti al mondo vivono d'impostura: e chi è di buon gusto, dissimula quando occorre, gode quando può, crede quel che vuole, ride de' pazzi, e figura un mondo a suo gusto.—GOLDONI.

"WHERE is the young bard," said King Arthur, after some nights of Christmas had passed by, "who brought me the news of my queen, and to whom I promised a boon, which he has not yet claimed?"

* Mor llawen ag Ngdolig yn Nghaerlleon.

None could satisfy the king's curiosity. Taliesin had disappeared from Caer Lleon. He knew the power and influence of Maelgon Gwyneth; and he was aware that King Arthur, however favourably he might receive his petition, would not find leisure to compel the liberation of Elphin, till he had enforced from Melvas the surrender of his queen. It occurred to him that her restoration might be effected by peaceable means; and he knew that, if he could be in any degree instrumental to this result, it would greatly strengthen his claims on the king. He engaged a small fishing-vessel, which had just landed a cargo for the Christmas feasts of Caer Lleon, and set sail for the isle of Avallon. At that period, the spring-tides of the sea rolled round a cluster of islands, of which Avallon was one, over the extensive fens, which wiser generations have embanked and reclaimed.

The abbey of Avallon, afterwards called Glastonbury, was, even then, a comely and commodious pile, though not possessing any of that magnificence which the accumulated wealth of ages subsequently gave to it. A large and strongly fortified castle, almost adjoining the abbey, gave to the entire place the air of a stronghold of the church militant. King Melvas was one of the pillars of the orthodoxy of those days: he was called the Scourge of the Pelagians; and extended the shield of his temporal might over the spiritual brotherhood of Avallon, who, in return, made it a point of conscience not to stint him in absolutions.

Some historians pretend that a comfortable nunnery was erected at a convenient distance from the abbey, that is to say, close to it; but this involves a nice question in monastic antiquity, which the curious may settle for themselves.

It was about midway between nones and vespers when Taliesin sounded, on the gate of the abbey, a notice of his wish for admission. A small trapdoor in the gate was cautiously opened, and a face, as round and as red as the setting sun in November, shone forth in the aperture.

The topographers who have perplexed themselves about the origin of the name of Ynys Avallon, "the island of apples," had not the advantage of this piece of meteoroscopy: if they could have looked on this archetype of a Norfolk beefin, with the knowledge that it was only a sample of a numerous fraternity, they would at once have perceived the fitness of the appellation. The brethren of Avallon were the

apples of the church. It was the oldest monastic establishment in Britain; and consequently, as of reason, the most plump, succulent, and rosy. It had, even in the sixth century, put forth the fruits of good living, in a manner that would have done honour to a more enlightened age. It went on steadily improving in this line till the days of its last abbot, Richard Whiting, who built the stupendous kitchen, which has withstood the ravages of time and the Reformation; and who, as appears by authentic documents, and, amongst others, by a letter signed with the honoured name of Russell, was found guilty, by a right worshipful jury, of being suspected of great riches, and of an inclination to keep them; and was accordingly sentenced to be hanged forthwith, along with his treasurer and subtreasurer, who were charged with aiding and abetting him in the safe custody of his cash and plate; at the same time that the Abbot of Peterborough was specially reprieved from the gallows, on the ground that he was the said Russell's particular friend. This was a compendium of justice and mercy according to the new light of King Henry the Eighth. The abbot's kitchen is the most interesting and perfect portion of the existing ruins. These ruins were overgrown with the finest ivy in England, till it was, not long since, pulled down by some Vandal, whom the Society of Antiquaries had sent down to make drawings of the walls, which he executed literally, by stripping them bare, that he might draw the walls, and nothing else. Its shade no longer waves over the musing moralist, who, with folded arms, and his back against a wall, dreams of the days that are gone; or the sentimental cockney, who, seating himself with much gravity on a fallen column, produces a flute from his pocket, and strikes up "I'd be a butterfly."

From the phænomenon of a blushing fruit that was put forth in the abbey gate of Avallon issued a deep, fat, gurgling voice, which demanded of Taliesin his name and business.

"I seek the Abbot of Avallon," said Taliesin.

"He is confessing a penitent," said the ghostly brother, who was officiating in turn as porter.

"I can await his leisure," said Taliesin, "but I must see him."

"Are you alone?" said the brother.

"I am," said Taliesin.

The gate unclosed slowly, just wide enough to give him admittance. It was then again barred and barricaded.

The ghostly brother, of whom Taliesin had now a full view, had a figure corresponding with his face, and wanted nothing but a pair of horns and a beard in ringlets to look like an avatar of Bacchus. He maintained, however, great gravity of face, and decorum of gesture, as he said to Taliesin, "Hospitality is the rule of our house; but we are obliged to be cautious in these times, though we live under powerful protection. Those bloody Nimrods, the Saxons, are athirst for the blood of the righteous. Monsters that are born with tails."

Taliesin had not before heard of this feature of Saxon conformation, and expressed his astonishment accordingly.

"How?" said the monk. "Did not a rabble of them fasten goats' tails to the robe of the blessed preacher in Kiw, and did he not, therefore, pray that their posterity might be born with tails? And it is so. But let that pass. Have they not sacked monasteries, plundered churches, and put holy brethren to the sword? The blood of the saints calls for vengeance."

"And will have it," said Taliesin, "from the hand of Arthur."

The name of Arthur evidently discomposed the monk, who, desiring Taliesin to follow him, led the way across the hall of the abbey, and along a short wide passage, at the end of which was a portly door.

The monk disappeared through this door, and, presently returning, said, "The abbot requires your name and quality."

"Taliesin, the bard of Elphin ap Gwythno Garanhir," was the reply.

The monk disappeared again, and returning, after a longer pause than before, said, "You may enter."

The abbot was a plump and comely man, of middle age, having three roses in his complexion, one in full blossom on each cheek, and one in bud on the tip of his nose.

He was sitting at a small table, on which stood an enormous vase, and a golden goblet; and opposite to him sat the penitent of whom the round-faced brother had spoken, and in whom Taliesin recognized his acquaintance of Dinas Vawr, who called himself Seithenyn ap Seithyn.

The abbot and Seithenyn sat with their arms folded on the

table, leaning forward towards each other, as if in momentous discussion.

The abbot said to Taliesin, "Sit;" and to his conductor, "Retire, and be silent."

"Will it not be better," said the monk, "that I cross my lips with the sign of secrecy?"

"It is permitted," said the abbot.

Seithenyn held forth the goblet to the monk, who swallowed the contents with much devotion. He then withdrew, and closed the door.

"I bid you most heartily welcome," said Seithenyn to Taliesin. "Drink off this, and I will tell you more. You are admitted to this special sitting at my special instance. I told the abbot I knew you well. Now I will tell you what I know. You have told King Arthur that King Melvas has possession of Queen Gwenyvar, and, in consequence, King Arthur is coming here, to sack and raze the castle and abbey, and cut every throat in the isle of Avallon. I have just brought the abbot this pleasant intelligence, and, as I knew it would take him down a cup or two, I have also brought what I call my little jug, to have the benefit of his judgment on a piece of rare wine which I have broached this morning: there is no better in Caer Lleon. And now we are holding council on the emergency. But I must say you abuse your bardic privilege, to enjoy people's hospitality, worm out their secrets, and carry the news to the enemy. It was partly to give you this candid opinion, that I have prevailed on the abbot to admit you to this special sitting. Therefore drink. GWIN O EUR: Wine from gold."

"King Arthur is not a Saxon, at any rate," sighed the abbot, winding up his fainting spirits with a draught. "Think not, young stranger, that I am transgressing the laws of temperance: my blood runs so cold when I think of the bloodthirsty Saxons, that I take a little wine medicinally, in the hope of warming it; but it is a slow and tedious remedy."

"Take a little more," said Seithenyn. "That is the true quantity. Wine is my medicine; and my quantity is a little more. A little more."

"King Arthur," said Taliesin, "is not a Saxon; but he does not brook injuries lightly. It were better for your abbey that he came not here in arms. The aiders and abettors of Melvas, even though they be spiritual, may not carry off the

matter without some share of his punishment, which is infallible."

"That is just what I've been thinking," said Seithenyn.

"God knows," said the abbot, "we are not abettors of Melvas, though we need his temporal power to protect us from the Saxons."

"How can it be otherwise," said Taliesin, "than that these Saxon despoilers should be insolent and triumphant, while the princes of Britain are distracted with domestic broils: and for what?"

"Ay," said Seithenyn, "that is the point. For what? For a woman, or some such rubbish."

"Rubbish, most verily," said the abbot. "Women are the flesh which we renounce with the devil."

"Holy father," said Taliesin, "have you not spiritual influence with Melvas, to persuade him to surrender the queen without bloodshed, and, renewing his allegiance to Arthur, assist him in his most sacred war against the Saxon invaders?"

"A righteous work," said the abbot; "but Melvas is headstrong and difficult."

"Screw yourself up with another goblet," said Seithenyn; "you will find the difficulty smooth itself off wonderfully. Wine from gold has a sort of double light, that illuminates a dark path miraculously."

The abbot sighed deeply, but adopted Seithenyn's method of throwing light on the subject.

"The anger of King Arthur," said Taliesin, "is certain, and its consequences infallible. The anger of King Melvas is doubtful, and its consequences to you cannot be formidable."

"That is nearly true," said the abbot, beginning to look resolute, as the rosebud at his nose-tip deepened into damask.

"A little more," said Seithenyn, "and it will become quite true."

By degrees the proposition ripened into absolute truth. The abbot suddenly inflated his cheeks, started on his legs, and stalked bolt upright out of the apartment, and forthwith out of the abbey, followed by Seithenyn, tossing his goblet in the air, and catching it in his hand, as he went.

The round-faced brother made his appearance almost immediately. "The abbot," he said, "commends you to the hospitality of the brotherhood. They will presently assemble to supper. In the meanwhile, as I am thirsty, and content

with whatever falls in my way, I will take a simple and single draught of whatever happens to be here."

His draught was a model of simplicity and singleness; for, having uplifted the ponderous vase, he held it to his lips till he had drained it of the very copious remnant which the abrupt departure of the abbot had caused Seithenyn to leave in it.

Taliesin proceeded to enjoy the hospitality of the brethren, who set before him a very comfortable hot supper, at which he quickly perceived, that, however dexterous King Elphin might be at catching fish, the monks of Avallon were very far his masters in the three great arts of cooking it, serving it up, and washing it down; but he had not time to profit by their skill and experience in these matters, for he received a pressing invitation to the castle of Melvas, which he obeyed immediately

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RIGHT OF MIGHT.

The three triumphs of the bards of the isle of Britain: the triumph of learning over ignorance; the triumph of reason over error; and the triumph of peace over violence.—*Triads of Bardism.*

"FRIEND Seithenyn," said the abbot, when, having passed the castle gates, and solicited an audience, he was proceeding to the presence of Melvas, "this task to which I have accinged myself, is arduous, and in some degree awful; being, in truth, no less than to persuade a king to surrender a possession, which he has inclination to keep for ever, and power to keep, at any rate, for an indefinite time."

"Not so very indefinite," said Seithenyn; "for with the first song of the cuckoo (whom I mention on this occasion as a party concerned), King Arthur will batter his castle about his ears, and, in all likelihood, the abbey about yours."

The abbot sighed heavily.

"If your heart fail you," said Seithenyn, "another cup of wine will set all to rights."

"Nay, nay, friend Seithenyn," said the abbot, "that which I have already taken has just brought me to the point at which the heart is inspirited and the wit sharpened, without any infraction of the wisdom and gravity which become my character, and best suit my present business."

Seithenyn, however, took an opportunity of making signs to some cupbearers, and, when they entered the apartment of Melvas they were followed by vessels of wine and goblets of gold.

King Melvas was a man of middle age, with a somewhat round, large, regular-featured face, and an habitual smile of extreme self-satisfaction, which he could occasionally convert into a look of terrific ferocity, the more fearful for being rare. His manners were, for the most part, pleasant. He did much mischief, not for mischief's sake, nor yet for the sake of excitement, but for the sake of something tangible. He had a total and most complacent indifference to everything but his own will and pleasure. He took what he wanted wherever he could find it, by the most direct process, and without any false pretence. He would have disdained the trick which the chroniclers ascribed to Hengist, of begging as much land as a bull's hide would surround, and then shaving it into threads, which surrounded a goodly space. If he wanted a piece of land, he encamped upon it, saying, "This is mine." If the former possessor could eject him, so; it was not his: if not, so; it remained his. Cattle, wine, furniture, another man's wife, whatever he took a fancy to, he pounced upon and appropriated. He was intolerant of resistance, and, as the shortest way of getting rid of it, and not from any bloodthirstiness of disposition, or, as the phrenologists have it, development of the organ of destructiveness, he always cut through the resisting body, longitudinally, horizontally, or diagonally, as he found most convenient. He was the archmarauder of West Britain. The abbey of Avallon shared largely in the spoil, and they made up together a most harmonious church and state. He had some respect for King Arthur; wished him success against the Saxons; knew the superiority of his power to his own; but he had heard that Queen Gwenyvar was the most beautiful woman in Britain; was, therefore, satisfied of his own title to her, and, as she was hunting in the forest, while King Arthur was absent from Caer Lleon, he seized her, and carried her off.

"Be seated, holy father," said Melvas; "and you also, Seithenyn, unless the abbot wishes you away."

But the abbot's heart misgave him, and he assented readily to Seithenyn's stay.

Melvas.—Now, holy father, to your important matter of private conference.

Seithenyn.—He is tongue-tied, and a cup too low.

The Abbot.—Set the goblet before me, and I will sip in moderation.

Melvas.—Sip, or not sip, tell me your business.

The Abbot.—My business, of a truth, touches the lady your prisoner, King Arthur's queen.

Melvas.—She is my queen, while I have her, and no prisoner. Drink, man, and be not afraid. Speak your mind: I will listen, and weigh your words.

The Abbot.—This queen—

Seithenyn.—Obey the king: first drink, then speak.

The Abbot.—I drink to please the king.

Melvas.—Proceed.

The Abbot.—This queen, Gwenyvar, is as beautiful as Helen, who caused the fatal war that expelled our forefathers from Troy: and I fear she will be a second Helen, and expel their posterity from Britain.* The infidel Saxons, to whom the cowardly and perfidious Vortigern gave footing in Britain, have prospered even more by the disunion of her princes than either by his villany or their own valour. And now there is no human hope against them but in the arms of Arthur. And how shall his arms prosper against the common enemy, if he be forced to turn them on the children of his own land for the recovery of his own wife?

Melvas.—What do you mean by his own? That which he has is his own: but that which I have is mine. I have the wife in question, and some of the land. Therefore, they are mine.

The Abbot.—Not so. The land is yours under fealty to him.

* According to the "British Chronicles," Brutus, the great grandson of Æneas, having killed his father, Silvius, to fulfil a prophecy, went to Greece, where he found the posterity of Helenus, the son of Priam; collected all of the Trojan race within the limits of Greece; and, after some adventures by land and sea, settled them in Britain, which was before uninhabited, "except by a few giants."

Melvas.—As much fealty as I please, or he can force me to give him.

The Abbot.—His wife, at least, is most lawfully his.

Melvas.—The winner makes the law, and his law is always against the loser. I am so far the winner, and, by my own law, she is lawfully mine.

The Abbot.—There is a law above all human law, by which she is his.

Melvas.—From that it is for you to absolve me; and I dispense my bounty according to your indulgence.

The Abbot.—There are limits we must not pass.

Melvas.—You set up your landmark, and I set up mine. They are both movable.

The Abbot.—The Church has not been niggardly in its indulgences to King Melvas.

Melvas.—Nor King Melvas in his gifts to the Church.

The Abbot.—But, setting aside this consideration, I would treat it as a question of policy.

Seithenyn.—Now you talk sense. Right without might is the lees of an old barrel, without a drop of the original liquor.

The Abbot.—I would appeal to you, King Melvas, by your love to your common country, by your love of the name of Britain, by your hatred of the infidel Saxons, by your respect for the character of Arthur; will you let your passion for a woman, even though she be a second Helen, frustrate, or even impede, the great cause of driving these spoilers from a land in which they have no right even to breathe?

Melvas.—They have a right to do all they do, and to have all they have. If we can drive them out, they will then have no right here. Have not you and I a right to this good wine, which seems to trip very merrily over your ghostly palate? I got it by seizing a good ship, and throwing the crew overboard, just to remove them out of the way, because they were troublesome. They disputed my right, but I taught them better. I taught them a great moral lesson, though they had not much time to profit by it. If they had had the might to throw me overboard, I should not have troubled myself about their right, any more, or at any rate, any longer, than they did about mine.

Seithenyn.—The wine was lawful spoil of war.

The Abbot.—But, if King Arthur brings his might to bear

upon yours, I fear neither you nor I shall have a right to this wine, nor to anything else that is here.

Seithenyn.—Then make the most of it while you have it.

The Abbot.—Now, while you have some months of security before you, you may gain great glory by surrendering the lady; and, if you be so disposed, you may, no doubt, claim from the gratitude of King Arthur, the fairest princess of his court to wife, and an ample dower withal.

Melvas.—That offers something tangible.

Seithenyn.—Another ray from the golden goblet will set it in a most luminous view.

The Abbot.—Though I should advise the not making it a condition, but asking it as a matter of friendship, after the first victory that you have helped him to gain over the Saxons.

Melvas.—The worst of those Saxons is, that they offer nothing tangible, except hard knocks. They bring nothing with them. They come to take; and lately they have not taken much. But I will muse on your advice; and, as it seems I may get more by following than rejecting it, I shall very probably take it, provided that you now attend me to the banquet in the hall.

Seithenyn.—Now you talk of the hall and the banquet, I will just intimate that the finest of all youths, and the best of all bards, is a guest in the neighbouring abbey.

Melvas.—If so, I have a clear right to him, as a guest for myself.

The abbot was not disposed to gainsay King Melvas's right. Taliesin was invited accordingly, and seated at the left hand of the king, the abbot being on the right. Taliesin summoned all the energies of his genius to turn the passions of Melvas into the channels of anti-Saxonism, and succeeded so perfectly that the king and his whole retinue of magnanimous heroes were inflamed with intense ardour to join the standard of Arthur; and Melvas vowed most solemnly to Taliesin that another sun should not set before Queen Gwenyvar should be under the most honourable guidance on her return to Caer Lleon.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CIRCLE OF THE BARDS.

The three dignities of poetry: the union of the true and the wonderful; the union of the beautiful and the wise; and the union of art and nature.—*Triads of Poetry.*

AMONGST the Christmas amusements of Caer Lleon, a grand Bardic Congress was held in the Roman theatre, when the principal bards of Britain contended for the pre-eminence in the art of poetry, and in its appropriate moral and mystical knowledge. The meeting was held by daylight. King Arthur presided, being himself an irregular bard, and admitted on this public occasion, to all the efficient honours of a Bard of Presidency.

To preside in the Bardic Congress was long a peculiar privilege of the kings of Britain. It was exercised in the seventh century by King Cadwallader. King Arthur was assisted by twelve umpires, chosen by the bards, and confirmed by the king.

The Court, of course, occupied the stations of honour, and every other part of the theatre was crowded with a candid and liberal audience.

The bards sate in a circle on that part of the theatre corresponding with the portion which we call the stage.

Silence was proclaimed by the herald; and after a grand symphony, which was led off in fine style by the king's harper, Geraint, Prince Cei came forward, and made a brief oration, to the effect that any of the profane who should be irregular and tumultuous, would be forcibly removed from the theatre, to be dealt with at the discretion of the officer of the guard. Silence was then a second time proclaimed by the herald.

Each bard, as he stood forward, was subjected to a number of interrogatories, metrical and mystical, which need not be here reported. Many bards sang many songs. Amongst them, Prince Llywarch sang—

GORWYNION Y GAUAV.

THE BRILLIANCIES OF WINTER.

Last of flowers, in tufts around
Shines the gorse's golden bloom:
Milkwhite lichens clothe the ground
'Mid the flowerless heath and broom:
Bright are holly-berries, seen
Red, through leaves of glossy green.

Brightly, as on rocks they leap,
Shine the sea-waves, white with spray;
Brightly, in the dingles deep,
Gleams the river's foaming way;
Brightly through the distance show
Mountain-summits clothed in snow.

Brightly, where the torrents bound,
Shines the frozen colonnade,
Which the black rocks, dripping round,
And the flying spray have made:
Bright the ice-drops on the ash
Leaning o'er the cataract's dash.

Bright the hearth, where feast and song
Crown the warrior's hour of peace,
While the snow-storm drives along,
Bidding war's worse tempest cease;
Bright the hearth-flame flashing clear
On the up-hung shield and spear.

Bright the torch-light of the hall
When the wintry night-winds blow;
Brightest when its splendours fall
On the mead-cup's sparkling flow:
While the maiden's smile of light
Makes the brightness trebly bright.

Close the portals; pile the hearth;
Strike the harp; the feast pursue;
Brim the horns: fire, music, mirth,
Mead and love are winter's due.
Spring to purple conflict calls
Swords that shine on Winter's walls.

Llywarch's song was applauded, as presenting a series of images with which all present were familiar, and which were all of them agreeable.

Merlin sang some verses of the poem which is called—

AVALLENAU MYRDDIN.

MERLIN'S APPLE-TREES.

Fair the gift to Merlin given,
Apple-trees seven score and seven ;
Equal all in age and size ;
On a green hill-slope that lies
Basking in the southern sun,
Where bright waters murmuring run.

Just beneath, the pure stream flows ;
High above, the forest grows ;
Not again on earth is found
Such a slope of orchard-ground :
Song of birds, and hum of bees,
Ever haunt the apple-trees.

Lovely green their leaves in spring ;
Lovely bright their blossoming :
Sweet the shelter and the shade
By their summer foliage made :
Sweet the fruit their ripe boughs hold,
Fruit delicious, tinged with gold.

Gloyad, nymph with tresses bright,
Teeth of pearl, and eyes of light,
Guards these gifts of Ceidio's son,
Gwendol, the lamented one,
Him, whose keen-edged sword no more
Flashes 'mid the battle's roar.

War has raged on vale and hill :
That fair grove was peaceful still.
There have chiefs and princes sought
Solitude and tranquil thought :
There have kings, from courts and throngs,
Turned to Merlin's wild-wood songs.

Now from echoing woods I hear
Hostile axes sounding near :
On the sunny slope reclined,
Feverish grief disturbs my mind,
Lest the wasting edge consume
My fair spot of fruit and bloom.

Lovely trees, that long alone
In the sylvan vale have grown,
Bare, your sacred plot around,
Grows the once wood-waving ground :
Fervent valour guards ye still ;
Yet my soul presages ill.

Well I know, when years have flown,
Briars shall grow where ye have grown :
Them in turn shall power uproot ;
Then again shall flowers and fruit
Flourish in the sunny breeze,
On my new-born apple-trees.

This song was heard with much pleasure, especially by those of the audience who could see, in the imagery of the apple-trees, a mystical type of the doctrines and fortunes of Druidism, to which Merlin was suspected of being secretly attached, even under the very nose of St. David.

Aneurin sung a portion of his poem on the battle of Cattraeth; in which he shadowed out the glory of Vortimer the weakness of Vortigern, the fascinations of Rowena, the treachery of Hengist, and the vengeance of Emrys.

THE MASSACRE OF THE BRITONS.

Sad was the day for Britain's land,
A day of ruin to the free,
When Gorthyn * stretched a friendly hand
To the dark dwellers of the sea.†

But not in pride the Saxon trod,
Nor force nor fraud oppressed the brave,
Ere the gray stone and flowery sod
Closed o'er the blessed hero's grave.‡

The twice-raised monarch § drank the charm,
The love-draught of the ocean-maid :‖
Vain then the Briton's heart and arm,
Keen spear, strong shield, and burnished blade.

"Come to the feast of wine and mead,"
Spake the dark dweller of the sea :¶
"There shall the hours in mirth proceed;
There neither sword nor shield shall be."

Hard by the sacred temple's site,
Soon as the shades of evening fall,
Resounds with song and glows with light
The ocean-dweller's rude-built hall.

* Gwrtheyrn : Vortigern.
† Hengist and Horsa.
‡ Gwrthevyr : Vortimer : who drove the Saxons out of Britain.
§ Vortigern : who was, on the death of his son Vortimer, restored to the throne from which he had been deposed.
‖ *Ronwen* : Rowena.
¶ *Hengist.*

The sacred ground, where chiefs of yore
The everlasting fire adored,
The solemn pledge of safety bore,
And breathed not of the treacherous sword.

The amber wreath his temples bound;
His vest concealed the murderous blade;
As man to man, the board around,
The guileful chief his host arrayed.

None but the noblest of the land,
The flower of Britain's chiefs, were there:
Unarmed, amid the Saxon band,
They sate, the fatal feast to share.

Three hundred chiefs, three score and three,
Went, where the festal torches burned
Before the dweller of the sea:
They went; and three alone returned.

Till dawn the pale sweet mead they quaffed:
The ocean-chief unclosed his vest;
His hand was on his dagger's haft,
And daggers glared at every breast.

But him, at Eidiol's * breast who aimed,
The mighty Briton's arm laid low:
His eyes with righteous anger flamed;
He wrenched the dagger from the foe;

And through the throng he cleft his way,
And raised without his battle cry;
And hundreds hurried to the fray,
From towns, and vales, and mountains high.

But Britain's best blood dyed the floor
Within the treacherous Saxon's hall;
Of all, the golden chain who wore,
Two only answered Eidiol's call.

Then clashed the sword; then pierced the lance;
Then by the axe the shield was riven;
Then did the steed on Cattraeth prance,
And deep in blood his hoofs were driven.

Even as the flame consumes the wood,
So Eidiol rushed along the field;
As sinks the snow-bank in the flood,
So did the ocean-rovers yield.

The spoilers from the fane he drove;
He hurried to the rock-built tower,
Where the base king,† in mirth and love,
Sate with his Saxon paramour.†

* Eidiol or Emrys: Emrys Wledig: Ambrosius.
† Vortigern and Rowena.

The storm of arms was on the gate,
The blaze of torches in the hall,
So swift, that ere they feared their fate,
The flames had scaled their chamber wall.

They died: for them no Briton grieves;
No planted flower above them waves;
No hand removes the withered leaves
That strew their solitary graves.

And time the avenging day brought round
That saw the sea-chief vainly sue:
To make his false host bite the ground
Was all the hope our warrior knew.

And evermore the strife he led,
Disdaining peace, with princely might,
Till, on a spear, the spoiler's* head
Was reared on Caer-y-Cynan's height.

The song of Aneurin touched deeply on the sympathies of the audience, and was followed by a grand martial symphony, in the midst of which Taliesin appeared in the Circle of Bards. King Arthur welcomed him with great joy, and sweet smiles were showered upon him from all the beauties of the court.

Taliesin answered the metrical and mystical questions to the astonishment of the most proficient; and, advancing, in his turn, to the front of the circle, he sang a portion of a poem which is now called HANES TALIESIN, The History of Taliesin; but which shall be here entitled

THE CAULDRON OF CERIDWEN.

The sage Ceridwen was the wife
Of Tegid Voël, of Pemble Mere:
Two children blest their wedded life,
Morvran and Creirwy, fair and dear:
Morvran, a son of peerless worth,
And Creirwy, loveliest nymph of earth:
But one more son Ceridwen bare,
As foul as they before were fair.

She strove to make Avagddu wise;
She knew he never could be fair:
And, studying magic mysteries,
She gathered plants of virtue rare:
She placed the gifted plants to steep
Within the magic cauldron deep,
Where they a year and day must boil,
Till three drops crown the matron's toil.

* Hengist.

Nine damsels raised the mystic flame;
Gwion the Little near it stood:
The while for simples roved the dame
Through tangled dell and pathless wood.
And, when the year and day had past,
The dame within the cauldron cast
The consummating chaplet wild,
While Gwion held the hideous child.

But from the cauldron rose a smoke
That filled with darkness all the air:
When through its folds the torchlight broke,
Nor Gwion, nor the boy, was there.
The fire was dead, the cauldron cold,
And in it lay, in sleep unrolled,
Fair as the morning-star, a child,
That woke, and stretched its arms, and smiled.

What chanced her labours to destroy,
She never knew; and sought in vain
If 'twere her own misshapen boy,
Or little Gwion, born again:
And, vext with doubt, the babe she rolled
In cloth of purple and of gold,
And in a coracle consigned
Its fortunes to the sea and wind.

The summer night was still and bright,
The summer moon was large and clear,
The frail bark, on the springtide's height,
Was floated into Elphin's weir.
The baby in his arms he raised:
His lovely spouse stood by, and gazed,
And, blessing it with gentle vow,
Cried "TALIESIN!" "Radiant brow!"

And I am he: and well I know
Ceridwen's power protects me still;
And hence o'er hill and vale I go,
And sing, unharmed, whate'er I will.
She has for me Time's veil withdrawn:
The images of things long gone,
The shadows of the coming days,
Are present to my visioned gaze.

And I have heard the words of power,
By Ceirion's solitary lake,
That bid, at midnight's thrilling hour,
Eryri's hundred echoes wake.
I to Diganwy's towers have sped,
And now Caer Lleon's halls I tread,
Demanding justice, now, as then,
From Maelgon, most unjust of men.

The audience shouted with delight at the song of Taliesin, and King Arthur, as President of the Bardic Congress, conferred on him, at once, the highest honours of the sitting.

Where Taliesin picked up the story which he told of himself, why he told it, and what he meant by it, are questions not easily answered. Certain it is, that he told this story to his contemporaries, and that none of them contradicted it. It may, therefore, be presumed that they believed it; as any one who pleases is most heartily welcome to do now.

Besides the single songs, there were songs in dialogue, approaching very nearly to the character of dramatic poetry; and pennillion, or unconnected stanzas, sung in series by different singers, the stanzas being complete in themselves, simple as Greek epigrams, and presenting in succession moral precepts, pictures of natural scenery, images of war or of festival, the lamentations of absence or captivity, and the complaints or triumphs of love. This pennillion-singing long survived among the Welsh peasantry almost every other vestige of bardic customs, and may still be heard among them on the few occasions on which rack-renting, tax-collecting, common-enclosing, methodist-preaching, and similar developments of the light of the age, have left them either the means or inclination of making merry.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE JUDGMENTS OF ARTHUR.

Three things to which success cannot fail where they shall justly be: discretion, exertion, and hope.—*Triads of Wisdom.*

KING ARTHUR had not long returned to his hall, when Queen Gwenyvar arrived, escorted by the Abbot of Avallon and Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi, who had brought his golden goblet, to gain a new harvest of glory from *the* cellars of Caer Lleon.

Seithenyn assured King Arthur, in the name of King

Melvas, and on the word of a king, backed by that of his butler, which, truth being in wine, is good warranty even for a king, that the queen returned as pure as on the day King Melvas had carried her off.

"None here will doubt that," said Gwenvach, the wife of Modred. Gwenyvar was not pleased with the compliment, and, almost before she had saluted King Arthur, she turned suddenly round, and slapped Gwenvach on the face, with a force that brought more crimson into one cheek than blushing had ever done into both. This slap is recorded in the Bardic Triads as one of the Three Fatal Slaps of the Island of Britain. A terrible effect is ascribed to this small cause; for it is said to have been the basis of that enmity between Arthur and Modred, which terminated in the battle of Camlan, wherein all the flower of Britain perished on both sides: a catastrophe more calamitous than any that ever before or since happened in Christendom, not even excepting that of the battle of Roncesvalles; for, in the battle of Camlan, the Britons exhausted their own strength, and could no longer resist the progress of the Saxon supremacy. This, however, was a later result, and comes not within the scope of the present veridicous narrative.

Gwenvach having flounced out of the hall, and the tumult occasioned by this little incident having subsided, Queen Gwenyvar took her ancient seat by the side of King Arthur, who proceeded to inquire into the circumstances of her restoration. The Abbot of Avallon began an oration, in praise of his own eloquence, and its miraculous effects on King Melvas; but he was interrupted by Seithenyn, who said, "The abbot's eloquence was good and well timed; but the chief merit belongs to this young bard, who prompted him with good counsel, and to me, who inspirited him with good liquor. If he had not opened his mouth pretty widely when I handed him this golden goblet, exclaiming GWIN O EUR, he would never have had the heart to open it to any other good purpose. But the most deserving person is this very promising youth, in whom I can see no fault, but that he has not the same keen perception as my friend the abbot has of the excellent relish of wine from gold. To be sure, he plied me very hard with strong drink in the hall of Dinas Vawr, and thereby wormed out of me the secret of Queen Gwenyvar's captivity; and, afterwards, he pursued us to Avallon, where he persuaded

me and the abbot, and the abbot persuaded King Melvas, that it would be better for all parties to restore the queen peaceably: and then he clenched the matter with the very best song I ever heard in my life. And, as my young friend has a boon to ask, I freely give him all my share of the merit, and the abbot's into the bargain."

"Allow me, friend GWIN O EUR," said the abbot, "to dispose of my own share of merit in my own way. But, such as it is, I freely give it to this youth, in whom, as you say, I can see no fault, but that his head is brimfull of Pagan knowledge."

Arthur paid great honour to Taliesin, and placed him on his left hand at the banquet. He then said to him, "I judge, from your song of this morning, that the boon you require from me concerns Maelgon Gwyneth. What is his transgression, and what is the justice you require?"

Taliesin narrated the adventures of Elphin in such a manner as gave Arthur an insight into his affection for Melanghel; and he supplicated King Arthur to command and enforce the liberation of Elphin from the Stone Tower of Diganwy.

Before King Arthur could signify his assent, Maelgon Gwyneth stalked into the hall, followed by a splendid retinue. He had been alarmed by the absence of Rhûn, had sought him in vain on the banks of the Mawddach, had endeavoured to get at the secret by pouncing upon Angharad and Melanghel, and had been baffled in his project by the vigilance of Teithrin ap Tathral. He had, therefore, as a last resort, followed Taliesin to Caer Lleon, conceiving that he might have had some share in the mysterious disappearance of Rhûn.

Arthur informed him that he was in possession of all the circumstance, and that Rhûn, who was in safe custody, would be liberated on the restoration of Elphiń.

Maelgon boiled with rage and shame, but had no alternative but submission to the will of Arthur.

King Arthur commanded that all the parties should be brought before him. Caradoc was charged with the execution of this order, and, having received the necessary communications and powers from Maelgon and Taliesin, he went first to Diganwy, where he liberated Elphin, and then proceeded to give effect to Teithrin's declaration, that "no hand but Elphin's should raise the stone of Rhûn's captivity." Rhûn,

while his pleasant adventure had all the gloss of novelty upon it, and his old renown as a gay deceiver was consequently in such dim eclipse, was very unwilling to present himself before the ladies of Caer Lleon; but Caradoc was peremptory, and carried off the crest-fallen prince, together with his bard of all work, who was always willing to go to any court, with any character, or none.

Accordingly, after a moderate lapse of time, Caradoc re-appeared in the hall of Arthur, with the liberated captives, accompanied by Angharad and Melanghel, and Teithrin ap Tathral.

King Arthur welcomed the new comers with a magnificent festival, at which all the beauties of his court were present, and, addressing himself to Elphin, said, "We are all debtors to this young bard: my queen and myself for her restoration to me; you for your liberation from the Stone Tower of Diganwy. Now, if there be, amongst all these ladies, one whom he would choose for his bride, and in whose eyes he may find favour, I will give the bride a dowry worthy of the noblest princess in Britain."

Taliesin, thus encouraged, took the hand of Melanghel, who did not attempt to withdraw it, but turned to her father a blushing face, in which he read her satisfaction and her wishes. Elphin immediately said, "I have nothing to give him but my daughter; but her I most cordially give him."

Taliesin said, "I owe to Elphin more than I can ever repay: life, honour, and happiness."

Arthur said, "You have not paid him ill; but you owe nothing to Maelgon and Rhûn, who are your debtors for a lesson of justice, which I hope they will profit by during the rest of their lives. Therefore Maelgon shall defray the charge of your wedding, which shall be the most splendid that has been seen in Caer Lleon."

Maelgon looked exceedingly grim, and wished himself well back in Diganwy.

There was a very pathetic meeting of recognition between Seithenyn and his daughter; at the end of which he requested her husband's interest to obtain for him the vacant post of second butler to King Arthur. He obtained this honourable office; and was so zealous in the fulfilment of its duties, that, unless on actual service with a detachment of liquor, he never was a minute absent from the Temple of Diana.

At a subsequent Bardic Congress, Taliesin was unanimously elected Pen Beirdd, or Chief of the Bards of Britain. The kingdom of Caredigion flourished under the protection of Arthur, and, in the ripeness of time, passed into the hands of Avaon, the son of Taliesin and Melanghel.

END OF THE MISFORTUNES OF ELPHIN.

CROTCHET CASTLE.

Le monde est plein de fous, et qui n'en veut pas voir,
Doit se tenir tout seul, et casser son miroir.

Should once the world resolve to abolish
All that's ridiculous and foolish,
It would have nothing left to do,
To apply in jest or earnest to.—BUTLER.

[First published in 1831.]

CROTCHET CASTLE.

CHAPTER I.

THE VILLA.

Captain Jamy. I wad full fain hear some question 'tween you tway.
Henry V.

IN one of those beautiful valleys, through which the Thames (not yet polluted by the tide, the scouring of cities, or even the minor defilement of the sandy streams of Surrey), rolls a clear flood through flowery meadows, under the shade of old beech woods, and the smooth glossy green-sward of the chalk hills (which pour into it their tributary rivulets, as pure and pellucid as the fountain of Bandusium, or the wells of Scamander, by which the wives and daughters of the Trojans washed their splendid garments in the days of peace, before the coming of the Greeks); in one of those beautiful valleys, on a bold round-surfaced lawn, spotted with juniper, that opened itself in the bosom of an old wood, which rose with a steep, but not precipitous ascent, from the river to the summit of the hill, stood the castellated villa of a retired citizen. Ebenezer Mac Crotchet, Esquire, was the London-born offspring of a worthy native of the "north countrie," who had walked up to London on a commercial adventure, with all his surplus capital, not very neatly tied up in a not very clean handkerchief, suspended over his shoulder from the end of a hooked stick, extracted from the first hedge on his pilgrimage; and who, after having worked himself a step or two up the ladder of life, had won the virgin heart of the only daughter of a highly respectable merchant of Duke's Place, with whom he inherited the honest fruits of a long series of ingenuous dealings.

Mr. Mac Crotchet had derived from his mother the instinct, and from his father the rational principle, of enriching himself at the expense of the rest of mankind, by all the recognized modes of accumulation on the windy side of the law. After passing many years in the alley, watching the turn of the market, and playing many games almost as desperate as that of the soldier of Lucullus,* the fear of losing what he had so righteously gained predominated over the sacred thirst of paper-money; his caution got the better of his instinct, or rather transferred it from the department of acquisition to that of conservation. His friend, Mr. Ramsbottom, the zodiacal mythologist, told him that he had done well to withdraw from the region of Uranus or Brahma, the maker, to that of Saturn or Veeshnu, the preserver, before he fell under the eye of Jupiter or Seva, the destroyer, who might have struck him down at a blow.

It is said, that a Scotchman returning home, after some years' residence in England, being asked what he thought of the English, answered: "They hanna ower muckle sense, but they are an unco braw people to live amang;" which would be a very good story, if it were not rendered apocryphal, by the incredible circumstance of the Scotchman going back.

Mr. Mac Crotchet's experience had given him a just title to make, in his own person, the last-quoted observation, but he would have known better than to go back, even if himself, and not his father, had been the first comer of his line from the north. He had married an English Christian, and, having none of the Scotch accent, was ungracious enough to be ashamed of his blood. He was desirous to obliterate alike the Hebrew and Caledonian vestiges in his name, and signed himself E. M. Crotchet, which by degrees induced the majority of his neighbours to think that his name was Edward Matthew. The more effectually to sink the Mac, he christened his villa Crotchet Castle, and determined to hand down to posterity the honours of Crotchet of Crotchet. He found it essential to his dignity to furnish himself with a coat of arms, which, after the proper ceremonies (payment being the principal), he obtained, videlicet: Crest, a crotchet rampant in A sharp: Arms, three empty bladders, turgescent, to show how opinions

* *Luculli* miles, &c.—Hor., Ep. ii. 2, 26. "In Anna's wars, a *soldier poor* and bold," &c.—Pope's Imitation.

are formed; three bags of gold, pendent, to show why they are maintained; three naked swords, tranchant, to show how they are administered; and three barbers' blocks, gaspant, to show how they are swallowed.

Mr. Crotchet was left a widower, with two children; and, after the death of his wife, so strong was his sense of the blessed comfort she had been to him, that he determined never to give any other woman an opportunity of obliterating the happy recollection.

He was not without a plausible pretence for styling his villa a castle, for, in its immediate vicinity, and within his own enclosed domain, were the manifest traces, on the brow of the hill, of a Roman station, or *castellum*, which was still called the castle by the country people. The primitive mounds and trenches, merely overgrown with greensward, with a few patches of juniper and box on the vallum, and a solitary ancient beech surmounting the place of the prætorium, presented nearly the same depths, heights, slopes, and forms, which the Roman soldiers had originally given them. From this *castellum* Mr. Crotchet christened his villa. With his rustic neighbours he was of course immediately and necessarily a squire—Squire Crotchet of the castle; and he seemed to himself to settle down as naturally into an English country gentleman, as if his parentage had been as innocent of both Scotland and Jerusalem, as his education was of Rome and Athens.

But as, though you expel nature with a pitchfork, she will yet always come back;* he could not become, like a true-born English squire, part and parcel of the barley-giving earth; he could not find in game-bagging, poacher-shooting, trespasser-pounding, footpath-stopping, common-enclosing, rack-renting, and all the other liberal pursuits and pastimes which make a country gentleman an ornament to the world and a blessing to the poor; he could not find in these valuable and amiable occupations, and in a corresponding range of ideas, nearly commensurate with that of the great King Nebuchadnezzar, when he was turned out to grass; he could not find in this great variety of useful action, and vast field of comprehensive thought, modes of filling up his time that accorded with his Caledonian instinct. The inborn love of

* Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.—Hor., Ep. i. 10, 24.

disputation, which the excitements and engagements of a life of business had smothered, burst forth through the calmer surface of a rural life. He grew as fain as Captain Jamy, "to hear some airgument betwixt ony tway;" and being very hospitable in his establishment, and liberal in his invitations, a numerous detachment from the advanced guard of the "march of intellect," often marched down to Crotchet Castle.

When the fashionable season filled London with exhibitors of all descriptions, lecturers, and else, Mr. Crotchet was in his glory; for, in addition to the perennial literati of the metropolis, he had the advantage of the visits of a number of hardy annuals, chiefly from the north, who, as the interval of their metropolitan flowering allowed, occasionally accompanied their London brethren in excursions to Crotchet Castle.

Amongst other things, he took very naturally to political economy, read all the books on the subject which were put forth by his own countrymen, attended all lectures thereon, and boxed the technology of the sublime science as expertly as an able seaman boxes the compass.

With this agreeable mania he had the satisfaction of biting his son, the hope of his name and race, who had borne off from Oxford the highest academical honours; and who, treading in his father's footsteps to honour and fortune, had, by means of a portion of the old gentleman's surplus capital, made himself a junior partner in the eminent loan-jobbing firm of Catchflat and Company. Here, in the days of paper-prosperity, he applied his science-illumined genius to the blowing of bubbles, the bursting of which sent many a poor devil to the jail, the workhouse, or the bottom of the river, but left young Crotchet rolling in riches.

These riches he had been on the point of doubling, by a marriage with the daughter of Mr. Touchandgo, the great banker, when, one foggy morning, Mr. Touchandgo and the contents of his till were suddenly reported absent; and as the fortune which the young gentleman had intended to marry was not forthcoming, this tender affair of the heart was nipped in the bud.

Miss Touchandgo did not meet the shock of separation quite so complacently as the young gentleman; for he lost only the lady, whereas she lost a fortune as well as a lover. Some jewels, which had glittered on her beautiful person as

brilliantly as the bubble of her father's wealth had done in the eyes of his gudgeons, furnished her with a small portion of paper currency; and this, added to the contents of a fairy purse of gold, which she found in her shoe on the eventful morning when Mr. Touchandgo melted into thin air, enabled her to retreat into North Wales, where she took up her lodging in a farm-house in Merionethshire, and boarded very comfortably for a trifling payment, and the additional consideration of teaching English, French, and music to the little Ap-Llymry's. In the course of this occupation, she acquired sufficient knowledge of Welsh to converse with the country people.

She climbed the mountains and descended the dingles, with a foot which daily habit made by degrees almost as steady as a native's. She became the nymph of the scene; and if she sometimes pined in thought for her faithless Strephon, her melancholy was anything but green and yellow; it was as genuine white and red as occupation, mountain air, thyme-fed mutton, thick cream, and fat bacon, could make it: to say nothing of an occasional glass of double X, which Ap-Llymry,* who yielded to no man west of the Wrekin in brewage, never failed to press upon her at dinner and supper. He was also earnest, and sometimes successful, in the recommendation of his mead, and most pertinacious on winter nights in enforcing a trial of the virtues of his elder wine. The young lady's personal appearance, consequently, formed a very advantageous contrast to that of her quondam lover, whose physiognomy the intense anxieties of his bubble-blowing days, notwithstanding their triumphant result, had left blighted, sallowed, and crow's-footed, to a degree not far below that of the fallen spirit who, in the expressive language of German romance, is described as "scathed by the ineradicable traces of the thunderbolts of Heaven;" so that, contemplating their relative geological positions, the poor deserted damsel was flourishing on slate, while her rich and false young knight was pining on chalk.

Squire Crotchet had also one daughter, whom he had christened Lemma, and who, as likely to be endowed with a very ample fortune, was, of course, an object very tempting to many young soldiers of fortune, who were marching with the march of mind, in a good condition for taking castles, as

* Llymry—Anglicè, flummery

far as not having a groat is a qualification for such exploits.* She was also a glittering bait to divers young squires expectant (whose fathers were too well acquainted with the occult signification of mortgage), and even to one or two sprigs of nobility, who thought that the lining of a civic purse would superinduce a very passable factitious nap upon a threadbare title. The young lady had received an expensive and complicated education; complete in all the elements of superficial display. She was thus eminently qualified to be the companion of any masculine luminary who had kept due pace with the "astounding progress" of intelligence. It must be confessed, that a man who has not kept due pace with it is not very easily found; this march being one of that "astounding" character in which it seems impossible that the rear can be behind the van. The young lady was also tolerably good-looking: north of the Tweed, or in Palestine, she would probably have been a beauty; but, for the valleys of the Thames, she was perhaps a little too much to the taste of Solomon, and had a nose which rather too prominently suggested the idea of the tower of Lebanon, which looked towards Damascus.

In a village in the vicinity of the castle was the vicarage of the Reverend Doctor Folliott, a gentleman endowed with a tolerable stock of learning, an interminable swallow, and an indefatigable pair of lungs. His pre-eminence in the latter faculty gave occasion to some etymologists to ring changes on his name, and to decide that it was derived from Follis Optimus, softened through an Italian medium into Folle Ottimo, contracted poetically into Folleotto, and elided Anglicè into Folliott, signifying a first-rate pair of bellows. He claimed to be descended lineally from the illustrious Gilbert Folliott, the eminent theologian, who was a bishop of London in the twelfth century, whose studies were interrupted in the dead of night by the devil; when a couple of epigrams passed between them; and the devil, of course, proved the smaller wit of the two.†

* "Let him take castles who has ne'er a groat."—POPE, *ubi supra*.

† The devil began (he had caught the bishop musing on politics):

Oh Gilberte Folliott!
Dum revolvis tot et tot,
Deus tuus est Astarot.

This reverend gentleman, being both learned and jolly, became by degrees an indispensable ornament to the new squire's table. Mr. Crotchet himself was eminently jolly, though by no means eminently learned. In the latter respect he took after the great majority of the sons of his father's land; had a smattering of many things, and a knowledge of none; but possessed the true northern art of making the most of his intellectual harlequin's jacket, by keeping the best patches always bright and prominent.

CHAPTER II.

THE MARCH OF MIND.

Quoth Ralpho: nothing but the abuse
Of human learning you produce.—BUTLER.

"GOD bless my soul, sir!" exclaimed the Reverend Doctor Folliott, bursting, one fine May morning, into the breakfast-room at Crotchet Castle, "I am out of all patience with this march of mind. Here has my house been nearly burned down, by my cook taking it into her head to study hydrostatics in a sixpenny tract, published by the

---

Oh Gilbert Folliott!
While thus you muse and plot,
Your God is Astarot.

The bishop answered:

Tace, dæmon: qui est deus
Sabbaot, est ille meus.

Peace, fiend; the power I own
Is Sabbaoth's Lord alone.

It must be confessed, the devil was easily posed in the twelfth century. He was a sturdier disputant in the sixteenth.

Did not the devil appear to Martin
Luther in Germany, for certain?

when the "heroic student," as Mr. Coleridge calls him, was forced to proceed to "*voies de fait.*" The curious may see at this day, on the wall of Luther's study, the traces of the ink-bottle which he threw at the devil's head.

Steam Intellect Society, and written by a learned friend who is for doing all the world's business as well as his own, and is equally well qualified to handle every branch of human knowledge. I have a great abomination of this learned friend; as author, lawyer, and politician, he is *triformis*, like Hecate: and in every one of his three forms he is *bifrons*, like Janus; the true Mr. Facing-both-ways of Vanity Fair. My cook must read his rubbish in bed; and, as might naturally be expected, she dropped suddenly fast asleep, overturned the candle, and set the curtains in a blaze. Luckily, the footman went into the room at the moment in time to tear down the curtains and throw them into the chimney, and a pitcher of water on her nightcap extinguished her wick: she is a greasy subject, and would have burned like a short mould."

The reverend gentleman exhaled his grievance without looking to the right or to the left; at length, turning on his pivot, he perceived that the room was full of company, consisting of young Crotchet and some visitors whom he had brought from London. The Reverend Doctor Folliott was introduced to Mr. Mac Quedy,* the economist; Mr. Skionar,† the transcendental poet; Mr. Firedamp, the meteorologist; and Lord Bossnowl, son of the Earl of Foolincourt, and member for the borough of Rogueingrain.

The divine took his seat at the breakfast-table, and began to compose his spirits by the gentle sedative of a large cup of tea, the demulcent of a well-buttered muffin, and the tonic of a small lobster.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—You are a man of taste, Mr. Crotchet. A man of taste is seen at once in the array of his breakfast-table. It is the foot of Hercules, the far-shining face of the great work, according to Pindar's doctrine: ἀρχομένου ἔργου πρόσωπον χρὴ δέμεν τηλαυγές.‡ The breakfast is the πρόσωπον of the great work of the day. Chocolate, coffee, tea, cream, eggs, ham, tongue, cold fowl,—all these are good, and bespeak good knowledge in him who sets them forth: but the touchstone is fish: anchovy is the first step, prawns and shrimps the second; and I laud him who reaches to these: potted char and lampreys are the third, and a fine

* Quasi Mac Q. E. D., son of a demonstration.

† ΣΚΙᾶς ΟΝΑΡ. *Umbræ somnium.*

‡ Far-shining be the face
Of a great work begun.—PIND., Ol. vi.

stretch of progression; but lobster is, indeed, matter for a May morning, and demands a rare combination of knowledge and virtue in him who sets it forth.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Well, sir, and what say you to a fine fresh trout, hot and dry, in a napkin? or a herring out of the water into the frying-pan, on the shore of Loch Fyne?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, I say every nation has some eximious virtue; and your country is pre-eminent in the glory of fish for breakfast. We have much to learn from you in that line at any rate.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—And in many others, sir, I believe. Morals and metaphysics, politics and political economy, the way to make the most of all the modifications of smoke; steam, gas, and paper currency; you have all these to learn from us; in short, all the arts and sciences. We are the modern Athenians.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—I, for one, sir, am content to learn nothing from you but the art and science of fish for breakfast. Be content, sir, to rival the Bœotians, whose redeeming virtue was in fish, touching which point you may consult Aristophanes and his scholiast, in the passage of Lysistrata, ἀλλ' ἄφελε τὰς ἐγχέλεις,* and leave the name of Athenians to those who have a sense of the beautiful, and a perception of metrical quantity.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Then, sir, I presume you set no value on the right principles of rent, profit, wages, and currency?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—My principles, sir, in these things are, to take as much as I can get, and to pay no more than I can help. These are every man's principles, whether they be the right principles or no. There, sir, is political economy in a nutshell.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—The principles, sir, which regulate production and consumption are independent of the will of any individual as to giving or taking, and do not lie in a nutshell by any means.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, I will thank you for a leg of that capon.

Lord Bossnowl.—But, sir, by-the-by, how came your footman to be going into your cook's room? It was very providential to be sure, but——

* Calonice wishes destruction to all Bœotians. Lysistrata answers, "*Except the eels.*"—LYSISTRATA, 36.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, as good came of it, I shut my eyes, and asked no questions. I suppose he was going to study hydrostatics, and he found himself under the necessity of practising hydraulics.

Mr. Firedamp.—Sir, you seem to make very light of science.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Yes, sir, such science as the learned friend deals in: everything for everybody, science for all, schools for all, rhetoric for all, law for all, physic for all, words for all, and sense for none. I say, sir, law for lawyers, and cookery for cooks: and I wish the learned friend, for all his life, a cook that will pass her time in studying his works; then every dinner he sits down to at home, he will sit on the stool of repentance.

Lord Bossnowl.—Now really that would be too severe: my cook should read nothing but Ude.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—No, sir! let Ude and the learned friend singe fowls together; let both avaunt from my kitchen. Θύρας δ' ἐπίθεσθε βεβήλοις.* Ude says an elegant supper may be given with sandwiches. *Horresco referens.* An elegant supper! *Di meliora piis.* No Ude for me. Conviviality went out with punch and suppers. I cherish their memory. I sup when I can, but not upon sandwiches. To offer me a sandwich, when I am looking for a supper, is to add insult to injury. Let the learned friend, and the modern Athenians, sup upon sandwiches.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Nay, sir; the modern Athenians know better than that. A literary supper in sweet Edinbroo' would cure you of the prejudice you seem to cherish against us.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Well, sir, well; there is cogency in a good supper; a good supper, in these degenerate days, bespeaks a good man; but much more is wanted to make up an Athenian. Athenians, indeed! where is your theatre? who among you has written a comedy? where is your Attic salt? which of you can tell who was Jupiter's great grandfather? or what metres will successively remain, if you take off the three first syllables, one by one, from a pure antispastic acatalectic tetrameter? Now, sir, there are three questions for you; theatrical, mythological, and metrical; to every one of

* "Shut the doors against the profane."—ORPHICA, *passim*.

which an Athenian would give an answer that would lay me prostrate in my own nothingness.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Well, sir, as to your metre and your mythology, they may e'en wait a wee. For your comedy, there is the Gentle Shepherd of the divine Allan Ramsay.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—The Gentle Shepherd! It is just as much a comedy as the book of Job.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Well, sir, if none of us have written a comedy, I cannot see that it is any such great matter, any more than I can conjecture what business a man can have at this time of day with Jupiter's great grandfather.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—The great business is, sir, that you call yourselves Athenians, while you know nothing that the Athenians thought worth knowing, and dare not show your noses before the civilized world in the practice of any one art in which they were excellent. Modern Athens, sir! the assumption is a personal affront to every man who has a Sophocles in his library. I will thank you for an anchovy.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Metaphysics, sir; metaphysics. Logic and moral philosophy. There we are at home. The Athenians only sought the way, and we have found it; and to all this we have added political economy, the science of sciences.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—A hyperbarbarous technology, that no Athenian ear could have borne. Premises assumed without evidence, or in spite of it; and conclusions drawn from them so logically, that they must necessarily be erroneous.

Mr. Skionar.—I cannot agree with you, Mr. Mac Quedy, that you have found the true road of metaphysics, which the Athenians only sought. The Germans have found it, sir: the sublime Kant, and his disciples.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—I have read the sublime Kant, sir, with an anxious desire to understand him; and I confess I have not succeeded.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—He wants the two great requisites of head and tail.

Mr. Skionar.—Transcendentalism is the philosophy of intuition, the development of universal convictions; truths which are inherent in the organization of mind, which cannot be obliterated, though they may be obscured, by superstitious prejudice on the one hand, and by the Aristotelian logic on the other.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Well, sir, I have no notion of logic obscuring a question.

Mr. Skionar.—There is only one true logic, which is the transcendental; and this can prove only the one true philosophy, which is also the transcendental. The logic of your modern Athens can prove everything equally; and that is, in my opinion, tantamount to proving nothing at all.

Mr. Crotchet.—The sentimental against the rational, the intuitive against the inductive, the ornamental against the useful, the intense against the tranquil, the romantic against the classical; these are great and interesting controversies, which I should like, before I die, to see satisfactorily settled.

Mr. Firedamp.—There is another great question, greater than all these, seeing that it is necessary to be alive in order to settle any question; and this is the question of water against human woe. Wherever there is water, there is *malaria*, and wherever there is *malaria* there are the elements of death. The great object of a wise man should be to live on a gravelly hill, without so much as a duck-pond within ten miles of him, eschewing cisterns and water-butts, and taking care that there be no gravel-pits for lodging the rain. The sun sucks up infection from water, wherever it exists on the face of the earth.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Well, sir, you have for you the authority of the ancient mystagogue, who said: Ἐστιν ὕδωρ ψυχῇ θάνατος.* For my part, I care not a rush (or any other aquatic and inesculent vegetable) who or what sucks up either the water or the infection. I think the proximity of wine a matter of much more importance than the longinquity of water. You are here within a quarter of a mile of the Thames; but, in the cellar of my friend Mr. Crotchet, there is the talismanic antidote of a thousand dozen of old wine; a beautiful spectacle, I assure you, and a model of arrangement.

Mr. Firedamp.—Sir, I feel the malignant influence of the river in every part of my system. Nothing but my great friendship for Mr. Crotchet would have brought me so nearly within the jaws of the lion.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—After dinner, sir, after dinner, I will meet you on this question. I shall then be armed for the strife. You may fight like Hercules against Achelous, but I

* Literally, which is sufficient for the present purpose, "Water is *death to the soul.*"—ORPHICA: *Fr.* XIX.

shall flourish the Bacchic thyrsus, which changed rivers into wine: as Nonnus sweetly sings: *Οἶνα κυμαίνεσθαι μέλας κελάρυζεν Ὑδάσπης.*†

Mr. Crotchet, jun.—I hope, Mr. Firedamp, you will let your friendship carry you a little closer into the jaws of the lion. I am fitting up a flotilla of pleasure-boats, with spacious cabins and a good cellar, to carry a choice philosophical party up the Thames and Severn, into the Ellesmere canal, where we shall be among the mountains of North Wales; which we may climb or not, as we think proper: but we will, at any rate, keep our floating hotel well provisioned: and we will try to settle all the questions over which a shadow of doubt yet hangs in the world of philosophy.

Mr. Firedamp.—Out of my great friendship for you, I will certainly go; but I do not expect to survive the experiment.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—*Alter erit tum Tiphys, et altera quæ vehat Argo Delectos Heroas.** I will be of the party, though I must hire an officiating curate, and deprive poor Mrs. Folliott, for several weeks, of the pleasure of combing my wig.

Lord Bossnowl.—I hope, if I am to be of the party, our ship is not to be the ship of fools! He! he!

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—If you are one of the party, sir, it most assuredly will not: ha! ha!

Lord Bossnowl.—Pray, sir, what do you mean by ha! ha!

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Precisely, sir, what you mean by he! he!

Mr. Mac Quedy.—You need not dispute about terms; they are two modes of expressing merriment, with or without reason; reason being in no way essential to mirth. No man should ask another why he laughs, or at what, seeing that he does not always know, and that, if he does, he is not a responsible agent. Laughter is an involuntary action of certain muscles, developed, in the human species, by the progress of civilization. The savage never laughs.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—No, sir; he has nothing to laugh at. Give him Modern Athens, the "learned friend," and the Steam Intellect Society. They will develop his muscles.

* Hydaspes gurgled, dark with billowy wine.—DIONYSIACA, XXV. 280.

† "Another Typhys on the waves shall float,
And chosen heroes freight his glorious boat."
VIRG., Ecl. IV.

CHAPTER III.

THE ROMAN CAMP.

He loved her more then seven yere,
Yet was he of her love never the nere;
He was not ryche of golde and fe,
A gentyll man forsoth was he.
The Squyr of Low Degre.

THE Rev. Dr. Folliott, having promised to return to dinner, walked back to his vicarage, meditating whether he should pass the morning in writing his next sermon, or in angling for trout, and had nearly decided in favour of the latter proposition, repeating to himself with great unction, the lines of Chaucer:—

And as for me, though I can but lite,
On bokis for to read I me delite,
And to 'hem yeve I faithe and full credence,
And in mine herte have 'hem in reverence,
So hertily that there is game none,
That fro my bokis makith me to gone,
But it be seldome, on the holie daie;
Save certainly whan that the month of Maie,
Is comin, and I hear the foulis sing,
And that the flouris ginnin for to spring,
Farewell my boke and my devocion:

when his attention was attracted by a young gentleman who was sitting on a camp-stool, with a portfolio on his knee, taking a sketch of the Roman Camp, which, as has been already said, was within the enclosed domain of Mr. Crotchet. The young stranger, who had climbed over the fence, espying the portly divine, rose up, and hoped that he was not trespassing. "By no means, sir," said the divine; "all the arts and sciences are welcome here: music, painting, and poetry; hydrostatics and political economy; meteorology, transcendentalism, and fish for breakfast."

The Stranger.—A pleasant association, sir, and a liberal and discriminating hospitality. This is an old British camp, I believe, sir?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Roman, sir; Roman: undeniably Roman. The vallum is past controversy. It was not a camp, sir, a *castrum*, but a *castellum*, a little camp, or watch-station, *to which* was attached, on the peak of the adjacent hill, a

beacon for transmitting alarms. You will find such here and there, all along the range of chalk hills, which traverses the country from north-east to south-west, and along the base of which runs the ancient Ikenild road, whereof you may descry a portion in that long straight white line.

The Stranger.—I beg your pardon, sir: do I understand this place to be your property?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—It is not mine, sir: the more is the pity; yet is it so far well, that the owner is my good friend, and a highly respectable gentleman.

The Stranger.—Good and respectable, sir, I take it, mean rich?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—That is their meaning, sir.

The Stranger.—I understand the owner to be a Mr. Crotchet. He has a handsome daughter, I am told.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—He has, sir. Her eyes are like the fishpools of Heshbon, by the gate of Bethrabbim; and she is to have a handsome fortune, to which divers disinterested gentlemen are paying their addresses. Perhaps you design to be one of them.

The Stranger.—No, sir; I beg pardon if my questions seem impertinent; I have no such design. There is a son, too, I believe, sir, a great and successful blower of bubbles.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—A hero, sir, in his line. Never did angler in September hook more gudgeons.

The Stranger.—To say the truth, two very amiable young people, with whom I have some little acquaintance, Lord Bossnowl, and his sister, Lady Clarinda, are reported to be on the point of concluding a double marriage with Miss Crotchet and her brother, by way of putting a new varnish on old nobility. Lord Foolincourt, their father, is terribly poor for a lord who owns a borough.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Well, sir, the Crotchets have plenty of money, and the old gentleman's weak point is a hankering after high blood. I saw your acquaintance Lord Bossnowl this morning; but I did not see his sister. She may be there, nevertheless, and doing fashionable justice to this fine May morning, by lying in bed till noon.

The Stranger.—Young Mr. Crotchet, sir, has been, like his father, the architect of his own fortune, has he not? An illustrious example of the reward of honesty and industry?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—As to honesty, sir, he made his

fortune in the city of London; and if that commodity be of any value there, you will find it in the price current. I believe it is below par, like the shares of young Crotchet's fifty companies. But his progress has not been exactly like his father's: it has been more rapid, and he started with more advantages. He began with a fine capital from his father. The old gentleman divided his fortune into three not exactly equal portions: one for himself, one for his daughter, and one for his son, which he handed over to him, saying, "Take it once for all, and make the most of it; if you lose it where I won it, not another stiver do you get from me during my life." But, sir, young Crotchet doubled, and trebled, and quadrupled it, and is, as you say, a striking example of the reward of industry; not that I think his labour has been so great as his luck.

The Stranger.—But, sir, is all this solid? is there no danger of reaction? no day of reckoning, to cut down in an hour prosperity that has grown up like a mushroom?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Nay, sir, I know not. I do not pry into these matters. I am, for my own part, very well satisfied with the young gentleman. Let those who are not so look to themselves. It is quite enough for me that he came down last night from London, and that he had the good sense to bring with him a basket of lobsters. Sir, I wish you a good-morning.

The stranger, having returned the reverend gentleman's good morning, resumed his sketch, and was intently employed on it when Mr. Crotchet made his appearance, with Mr. Mac Quedy and Mr. Skionar, whom he was escorting round his grounds, according to his custom with new visitors; the principal pleasure of possessing an extensive domain being that of showing it to other people. Mr. Mac Quedy, according also to the laudable custom of his countrymen, had been appraising everything that fell under his observation; but, on arriving at the Roman Camp, of which the value was purely imaginary, he contented himself with exclaiming, "Eh! this is just a curiosity, and very pleasant to sit in on a summer day."

Mr. Skionar.—And call up the days of old, when the Roman eagle spread its wings in the place of that beechen foliage. It gives a fine idea of duration, to think that that

fine old tree must have sprung from the earth ages after this camp was formed.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—How old, think you, may the tree be?

Mr. Crotchet.—I have records which show it to be three hundred years old.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—That is a great age for a beech in good condition. But you see the camp is some fifteen hundred years, or so, older; and three times six being eighteen, I think you get a clearer idea of duration out of the simple arithmetic than out of your eagle and foliage.

Mr. Skionar.—That is a very unpoetical, if not unphilosophical, mode of viewing antiquities. Your philosophy is too literal for our imperfect vision. We cannot look directly into the nature of things; we can only catch glimpses of the mighty shadow in the camera obscura of transcendental intelligence. These six and eighteen are only words to which we give conventional meanings. We can reason, but we cannot feel, by help of them. The tree and the eagle, contemplated in the ideality of space and time, become subjective realities, that rise up as landmarks in the mystery of the past.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Well, sir, if you understand that, I wish you joy. But I must be excused for holding that my proposition, three times six are eighteen, is more intelligible than yours. A worthy friend of mine, who is a sort of amateur in philosophy, criticism, politics, and a wee bit of many things more, says, "Men never begin to study antiquities till they are saturated with civilization."*

Mr. Skionar.—What is civilization?

Mr. Mac Quedy.—It is just respect for property: a state in which no man takes wrongfully what belongs to another, is a perfectly civilized state.

Mr. Skionar.—Your friend's antiquaries must have lived in El Dorado, to have had an opportunity of being saturated with such a state.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—It is a question of degree. There is more respect for property here than in Angola.

Mr. Skionar.—That depends on the light in which things are viewed.

Mr. Crotchet was rubbing his hands, in hopes of a fine discussion, when they came round to the side of the camp where the picturesque gentleman was sketching. The stranger

* *Edinburgh Review*, somewhere.

was rising up, when Mr. Crotchet begged him not to disturb himself, and presently walked away with his two guests.

Shortly after Miss Crotchet and Lady Clarinda, who had breakfasted by themselves, made their appearance at the same spot, hanging each on an arm of Lord Bossnowl, who very much preferred their company to that of the philosophers, though he would have preferred the company of the latter, or any company, to his own. He thought it very singular that so agreeable a person as he held himself to be to others, should be so exceedingly tiresome to himself: he did not attempt to investigate the cause of this phenomenon, but was contented with acting on his knowledge of the fact, and giving himself as little of his own private society as possible.

The stranger rose as they approached, and was immediately recognized by the Bossnowls as an old acquaintance, and saluted with the exclamation of "Captain Fitzchrome!" The interchange of salutation between Lady Clarinda and the captain, was accompanied with an amiable confusion on both sides, in which the observant eyes of Miss Crotchet seemed to read the recollection of an affair of the heart.

Lord Bossnowl was either unconscious of any such affair, or indifferent to its existence. He introduced the captain very cordially to Miss Crotchet, and the young lady invited him, as the friend of their guests, to partake of her father's hospitality; an offer which was readily accepted.

The captain took his portfolio under his right arm, his camp-stool in his right hand, offered his left arm to Lady Clarinda, and followed at a reasonable distance behind Miss Crotchet and Lord Bossnowl, contriving, in the most natural manner possible, to drop more and more into the rear.

Lady Clarinda.—I am glad to see you can make yourself so happy with drawing old trees and mounds of grass.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Happy, Lady Clarinda! oh, no! How can I be happy when I see the idol of my heart about to be sacrificed on the shrine of mammon?

Lady Clarinda.—Do you know, though Mammon has a sort of ill name, I really think he is a very popular character; there must be at the bottom something amiable about him. He is certainly one of those pleasant creatures whom everybody abuses, but without whom no evening party is endurable. I dare say love in a cottage is very pleasant; but then

it positively must be a cottage ornée: but would not the same love be a great deal safer in a castle, even if Mammon furnished the fortification?

Captain Fitzchrome.—Oh, Lady Clarinda! there is a heartlessness in that language that chills me to the soul.

Lady Clarinda.—Heartlessness! No: my heart is on my lips. I speak just what I think. You used to like it, and say it was as delightful as it was rare.

Captain Fitzchrome.—True, but you did not then talk as you do now, of love in a castle.

Lady Clarinda.—Well, but only consider: a dun is a horridly vulgar creature; it is a creature I cannot endure the thought of: and a cottage lets him in so easily. Now a castle keeps him at bay. You are a half-pay officer, and are at leisure to command the garrison: but where is the castle? and who is to furnish the commissariat?

Captain Fitzchrome.—Is it come to this, that you make a jest of my poverty? Yet is my poverty only comparative. Many decent families are maintained on smaller means.

Lady Clarinda.—Decent families: ay, decent is the distinction from respectable. Respectable means rich, and decent means poor. I should die if I heard my family called decent. And then your decent family always live in a snug little place: I hate a little place; I like large rooms and large looking-glasses, and large parties, and a fine large butler, with a tinge of smooth red in his face; an outward and visible sign that the family which he serves is respectable; if not noble, highly respectable.

Captain Fitzchrome.—I cannot believe that you say all this in earnest. No man is less disposed than I am to deny the importance of the substantial comforts of life. I once flattered myself that in our estimate of these things we were nearly of a mind.

Lady Clarinda.—Do you know, I think an opera-box a very substantial comfort, and a carriage. You will tell me that many decent people walk arm-in-arm through the snow, and sit in clogs and bonnets in the pit at the English theatre. No doubt it is very pleasant to those who are used to it; but it is not to my taste.

Captain Fitzchrome.—You always delighted in trying to provoke me; but I cannot believe that you have not a heart.

Lady Clarinda.—You do not like to believe that I have a

heart, you mean. You wish to think I have lost it, and you know to whom; and when I tell you that it is still safe in my own keeping, and that I do not mean to give it away, the unreasonable creature grows angry.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Angry! far from it: I am perfectly cool.

Lady Clarinda.—Why you are pursing your brows, biting your lips, and lifting up your foot as if you would stamp it into the earth. I must say anger becomes you; you would make a charming Hotspur. Your every-day-dining-out face is rather insipid: but I assure you my heart is in danger when you are in the heroics. It is so rare, too, in these days of smooth manners, to see anything like natural expression in a man's face. There is one set form for every man's face in female society; a sort of serious comedy, walking gentleman's face: but the moment the creature falls in love, he begins to give himself airs, and plays off all the varieties of his physiognomy, from the Master Slender to the Petruchio; and then he is actually very amusing.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Well, Lady Clarinda, I will not be angry, amusing as it may be to you: I listen more in sorrow than in anger. I half believe you in earnest, and mourn as over a fallen angel.

Lady Clarinda.—What, because I have made up my mind not to give away my heart when I can sell it? I will introduce you to my new acquaintance, Mr. Mac Quedy: he will talk to you by the hour about exchangeable value, and show you that no rational being will part with anything, except to the highest bidder.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Now, I am sure you are not in earnest. You cannot adopt such sentiments in their naked deformity.

Lady Clarinda.—Naked deformity: why Mr. Mac Quedy will prove to you that they are the cream of the most refined philosophy. You live a very pleasant life as a bachelor, roving about the country with your portfolio under your arm. I am not fit to be a poor man's wife. I cannot take any kind of trouble, or do any one thing that is of any use. Many decent families roast a bit of mutton on a string; but if I displease my father I shall not have as much as will buy the string, to say nothing of the meat; and the bare idea of h cookery gives me the horrors.

By this time they were near the castle, and met Miss

Crotchet and her companion, who had turned back to meet them. Captain Fitzchrome was shortly after heartily welcomed by Mr. Crotchet, and the party separated to dress for dinner, the captain being by no means in an enviable state of mind, and full of misgivings as to the extent of belief that he was bound to accord to the words of the lady of his heart.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PARTY.

En quoi cognoissez-vous la folie antique? En quoi cognoissez-vous la sagesse présente?—RABELAIS.

"IF I were sketching a bandit who had just shot his last pursuer, having outrun all the rest, that is the very face I would give him," soliloquized the captain, as he studied the features of his rival in the drawing-room, during the miserable half-hour before dinner, when dulness reigns predominant over the expectant company, especially when they are waiting for some one last comer, whom they all heartily curse in their hearts, and whom, nevertheless, or indeed therefore-the-more, they welcome as a sinner, more heartily than all the just persons who had been punctual to their engagement. Some new visitors had arrived in the morning, and, as the company dropped in one by one, the captain anxiously watched the unclosing door for the form of his beloved; but she was the last to make her appearance, and on her entry gave him a malicious glance, which he construed into a telegraphic communication that she had stayed away to torment him. Young Crotchet escorted her with marked attention to the upper end of the drawing-room, where a great portion of the company was congregated around Miss Crotchet. These being the only ladies in the company, it was evident that old Mr. Crotchet would give his arm to Lady Clarinda, an arrangement with which the captain could not interfere. He therefore took his station near the door, studying his rival from a distance, and determined to take advantage of his present position, to secure the seat next to his *charmer*. He was meditating on the best mode of opera-

tion for securing this important post with due regard to *bienséance*, when he was twitched by the button by Mr. MacQuedy, who said to him: "Lady Clarinda tells me, sir, that you are anxious to talk with me on the subject of exchangeable value, from which I infer that you have studied political economy; and as a great deal depends on the definition of value, I shall be glad to set you right on that point."—"I am much obliged to you, sir," said the captain, and was about to express his utter disqualification for the proposed instruction, when Mr. Skionar walked up, and said: "Lady Clarinda informs me that you wish to talk over with me the question of subjective reality. I am delighted to fall in with a gentleman who duly appreciates the transcendental philosophy."—"Lady Clarinda is too good," said the captain; and was about to protest that he had never heard the word transcendental before, when the butler announced dinner. Mr. Crotchet led the way with Lady Clarinda: Lord Bossnowl followed with Miss Crotchet: the economist and transcendentalist pinned in the captain, and held him, one by each arm, as he impatiently descended the stairs in the rear of several others of the company, whom they had forced him to let pass; but the moment he entered the dining-room he broke loose from them, and at the expense of a little *brusquerie*, secured his position.

"Well, captain," said Lady Clarinda, "I perceive you can still manœuvre."

"What could possess you," said the captain, "to send two unendurable and inconceivable bores to intercept me with rubbish about which I neither know nor care any more than the moon?"

"Perhaps," said Lady Clarinda, "I saw your design, and wished to put your generalship to the test. But do not contradict any thing I have said about you, and see if the learned will find you out."

"There is fine music," as Rabelais observes, in the *cliquetis d'assiettes*, a refreshing shade in the *ombre de salle à manger*, and an elegant fragrance in the *fumée de rôti*," said a voice at the captain's elbow. The captain, turning round, recognized his clerical friend of the morning, who knew him again immediately, and said he was extremely glad to meet him there; more especially as Lady Clarinda had assured him that he

an enthusiastic lover of Greek poetry.

"Lady Clarinda," said the captain, "is a very pleasant young lady."

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—So she is, sir: and I understand she has all the wit of the family to herself, whatever that *totum* may be. But a glass of wine after soup is, as the French say, the *verre de santé*. The current of opinion sets in favour of Hock: but I am for Madeira; I do not fancy Hock till I have laid a substratum of Madeira. Will you join me?

Captain Fitzchrome.—With pleasure.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Here is a very fine salmon before me: and May is the very *point nommé* to have salmon in perfection. There is a fine turbot close by, and there is much to be said in his behalf; but salmon in May is the king of fish.

Mr. Crotchet.—That salmon before you, doctor, was caught in the Thames this morning.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Παπαπαῖ! Rarity of rarities! A Thames salmon caught this morning. Now, Mr. Mac Quedy, even in fish your modern Athens must yield. *Cedite Graii.*

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Eh! sir, on its own ground, your Thames salmon has two virtues over all others: first, that it is fresh; and second, that it is rare; for I understand you do not take half a dozen in a year.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—In some years, sir, not one. Mud, filth, gas dregs, lock-weirs, and the march of mind, developed in the form of poaching, have ruined the fishery. But when we do catch a salmon, happy the man to whom he falls.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—I confess, sir, this is excellent; but I cannot see why it should be better than a Twaed salmon at Kelso.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, I will take a glass of hock with you.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—With all my heart, sir. There are several varieties of the salmon genus: but the common salmon, the *salmo salar*, is only one species, one and the same everywhere, just like the human mind. Locality and education make all the difference.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Education! Well, sir, I have no doubt schools for all are just as fit for the species *salmo salar* as for the genus *homo*. But you must allow that the speci-

men before us has finished his education in a manner that does honour to his college. However, I doubt that the *salmo salar* is only one species, that is to say, precisely alike in all localities. I hold that every river has its own breed, with essential differences, in flavour especially. And as for the human mind, I deny that it is the same in all men. I hold that there is every variety of natural capacity, from the idiot to Newton and Shakspeare; the mass of mankind midway between these extremes, being blockheads of different degrees; education leaving them pretty nearly as it found them, with this single difference, that it gives a fixed direction to their stupidity, a sort of incurable wry-neck to the thing they call their understanding. So one nose points always east, and another always west, and each is ready to swear that it points due north.

Mr. Crotchet.—If that be the point of truth, very few intellectual noses point due north.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Only those that point to the Modern Athens.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Where all native noses point southward.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Eh, sir, northward for wisdom, and southward for profit.

Mr. Crotchet, jun.—Champagne, doctor?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Most willingly. But you will permit my drinking it while it sparkles. I hold it a heresy to let it deaden in my hand while the glass of my *compotator* is being filled on the opposite side of the table. By-the-by, captain, you remember a passage in Athenæus, where he cites Menander on the subject of fish-sauce: ὀψάριον ἐπὶ ἰχθύος. (*The captain was aghast for an answer that would satisfy both his neighbours, when he was relieved by the divine continuing.*) The science of fish-sauce, Mr. Mac Quedy, is by no means brought to perfection; a fine field of discovery still lies open in that line.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Nay, sir, beyond lobster-sauce, I take it, ye cannot go.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—In their line, I grant you, oyster and lobster sauce are the pillars of Hercules. But I speak of the cruet sauces, where the quintessence of the sapid is condensed in a phial. I can taste, in my mind's palate, a combination which, if I could give it reality, I would christen

with the name of my college, and hand it down to posterity as the seat of learning indeed.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Well, sir, I wish you success, but I cannot let slip the question we started just now. I say, cutting off idiots, who have no minds at all, all minds are by nature alike. Education (which begins from their birth) makes them what they are.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—No, sir, it makes their tendencies, not their power. Cæsar would have been the first wrestler on the village common. Education might have made him a Nadir Shah; it might also have made him a Washington; it could not have made him a merry-andrew, for our newspapers to extol as a model of eloquence.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Now, sir, I think education would have made him just anything, and fit for any station, from the throne to the stocks; saint or sinner, aristocrat or democrat, judge, counsel, or prisoner at the bar.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—I will thank you for a slice of lamb, with lemon and pepper. Before I proceed with this discussion—Vin de Grave, Mr. Skionar—I must interpose one remark. There is a set of persons in your city, Mr. Mac Quedy, who concoct every three or four months a thing which they call a review: a sort of sugar-plum manufacturers to the Whig aristocracy.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—I cannot tell, sir, exactly what you mean by that; but I hope you will speak of those gentlemen with respect, seeing that I am one of them.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, I must drown my inadvertence in a glass of Sauterne with you. There is a set of gentlemen in your city——

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Not in our city, exactly; neither are they a set. There is an editor, who forages for articles in all quarters, from John O'Groat's house to the Land's End. It is not a board, or a society: it is a mere intellectual bazaar, where A, B, and C bring their wares to market.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Well, sir, these gentlemen among them, the present company excepted, have practised as much dishonesty as, in any other department than literature, would have brought the practitioner under the cognizance of the police. In politics, they have run with the hare and hunted with the hound. In criticism they have, knowingly and unblushingly, given false characters, both for good and for evil:

sticking at no art of misrepresentation to clear out of the field of literature all who stood in the way of the interests of their own clique. They have never allowed their own profound ignorance of anything (Greek, for instance) to throw even an air of hesitation into their oracular decision on the matter. They set an example of profligate contempt for truth, of which the success was in proportion to the effrontery; and when their prosperity had filled the market with competitors, they cried out against their own reflected sin, as if they had never committed it, or were entitled to a monopoly of it. The latter, I rather think, was what they wanted.

Mr. Crotchet.—Hermitage, doctor?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Nothing better, sir. The father who first chose the solitude of that vineyard, knew well how to cultivate his spirit in retirement. Now, Mr. Mac Quedy, Achilles was distinguished above all the Greeks for his inflexible love of truth: could education have made Achilles one of your reviewers?

Mr. Mac Quedy.—No doubt of it, even if your character of them were true to the letter.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—And I say, sir—chicken and asparagus—Titan had made him of better clay.* I hold with Pindar: "All that is most excellent is so by nature." Τὸ δὲ φυᾷ κράτιστον ἅπαν.† Education can give purposes, but not powers; and whatever purposes had been given him, he would have gone straight forward to them; straight forward, Mr. Mac Quedy.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—No, sir, education makes the man, powers, purposes, and all.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—There is the point, sir, on which we join issue.

Several others of the company now chimed in with their opinions, which gave the divine an opportunity to degustate one or two side dishes, and to take a glass of wine with each of the young ladies.

* Juv., xiv. 35. † Ol., ix. 152.

CHAPTER V.

CHARACTERS.

Ay imputé a honte plus que mediocre être vu spectateur ocieux de tant vaillans, disertz, et chevalereux personnaiges.—RABELAIS.

LADY CLARINDA (*to the Captain*).—I declare the creature has been listening to all this rigmarole, instead of attending to me. Do you ever expect forgiveness? But now that they are all talking together, and you cannot make out a word they say, nor they hear a word that we say, I will describe the company to you. First, there is the old gentleman on my left hand, at the head of the table, who is now leaning the other way to talk to my brother. He is a good-tempered, half-informed person, very unreasonably fond of reasoning, and of reasoning people; people that talk nonsense logically: he is fond of disputation himself, when there are only one or two, but seldom does more than listen in a large company of *illuminés*. He made a great fortune in the city, and has the comfort of a good conscience. He is very hospitable, and is generous in dinners; though nothing would induce him to give sixpence to the poor, because he holds that all misfortune is from imprudence, that none but the rich ought to marry, and that all ought to thrive by honest industry, as he did. He is ambitious of founding a family, and of allying himself with nobility; and is thus as willing as other grown children, to throw away thousands for a gewgaw, though he would not part with a penny for charity. Next to him is my brother, whom you know as well as I do. He has finished his education with credit, and as he never ventures to oppose me in anything, I have no doubt he is very sensible. He has good manners, is a model of dress, and is reckoned ornamental in all societies. Next to him is Miss Crotchet, my sister-in-law that is to be. You see, she is rather pretty, and very genteel. She is tolerably accomplished, has her table always covered with new novels, thinks Mr. Mac Quedy an oracle, and is extremely desirous to be called "my lady." Next to her is Mr. Firedamp, a very absurd person, who thinks that water is the evil principle. Next to him is Mr. Eavesdrop, a man who, by dint of a c tain something like smartness, has got into good society.

is a sort of bookseller's tool, and coins all his acquaintance in reminiscences and sketches of character. I am very shy of him, for fear he should print me.

Captain Fitzchrome.—If he print you in your own likeness, which is that of an angel, you need not fear him. If he print you in any other, I will cut his throat. But proceed—

Lady Clarinda.—Next to him is Mr. Henbane, the toxicologist, I think he calls himself. He has passed half his life in studying poisons and antidotes. The first thing he did on his arrival here, was to kill the cat; and while Miss Crotchet was crying over her, he brought her to life again. I am more shy of him than the other.

Captain Fitzchrome.—They are two very dangerous fellows, and I shall take care to keep them both at a respectful distance. Let us hope that Eavesdrop will sketch off Henbane, and that Henbane will poison him for his trouble.

Lady Clarinda.—Well, next to him sits Mr. Mac Quedy, the Modern Athenian, who lays down the law about everything, and therefore may be taken to understand everything. He turns all the affairs of this world into questions of buying and selling. He is the Spirit of the Frozen Ocean to everything like romance and sentiment. He condenses their volume of steam into a drop of cold water in a moment. He has satisfied me that I am a commodity in the market, and that I ought to set myself at a high price. So you see he who would have me must bid for me.

Captain Fitzchrome.—I shall discuss that point with Mr. Mac Quedy.

Lady Clarinda.—Not a word for your life. Our flirtation is our own secret. Let it remain so.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Flirtation, Clarinda! Is that all that the most ardent——

Lady Clarinda.—Now, don't be rhapsodical here. Next to Mr. Mac Quedy is Mr. Skionar, a sort of poetical philosopher, a curious compound of the intense and the mystical. He abominates all the ideas of Mr. Mac Quedy, and settles everything by sentiment and intuition.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Then, I say, he is the wiser man.

Lady Clarinda.—They are two oddities; but a little of them is amusing, and I like to hear them dispute. So you see I am in training for a philosopher myself.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Any philosophy, for heaven's sake,

but the pound-shilling-and-pence philosophy of Mr. Mac Quedy.

Lady Clarinda.—Why, they say that even Mr. Skionar, though he is a great dreamer, always dreams with his eyes open, or with one eye at any rate, which is an eye to his gain: but I believe that in this respect the poor man has got an ill name by keeping bad company. He has two dear friends, Mr. Wilful Wontsee, and Mr. Rumblesack Shantsee, poets of some note, who used to see visions of Utopia, and pure republics beyond the Western deep: but finding that these El Dorados brought them no revenue, they turned their vision-seeing faculty into the more profitable channel of espying all sorts of virtues in the high and the mighty who were able and willing to pay for the discovery.

Captain Fitzchrome.—I do not fancy these virtue-spyers.

Lady Clarinda.—Next to Mr. Skionar, sits Mr. Chainmail, a good-looking young gentleman, as you see, with very antiquated tastes. He is fond of old poetry, and is something of a poet himself. He is deep in monkish literature, and holds that the best state of society was that of the twelfth century, when nothing was going forward but fighting, feasting, and praying, which he says are the three great purposes for which man was made. He laments bitterly over the inventions of gunpowder, steam, and gas, which he says have ruined the world. He lives within two or three miles, and has a large hall, adorned with rusty pikes, shields, helmets, swords, and tattered banners, and furnished with yew-tree chairs, and two long, old, worm-eaten oak tables, where he dines with all his household, after the fashion of his favourite age. He wants us all to dine with him, and I believe we shall go.

Captain Fitzchrome.—That will be something new at any rate.

Lady Clarinda.—Next to him is Mr. Toogood, the co-operationist, who will have neither fighting nor praying; but wants to parcel out the world into squares like a chess-board, with a community on each, raising everything for one another, with a great steam-engine to serve them in common for tailor and hosier, kitchen and cook.

Captain Fitzchrome.—He is the strangest of the set so far.

Lady Clarinda.—This brings us to the bottom of the table, where sits my humble servant, Mr. Crotchet the younger. I ought not to describe him.

Captain Fitzchrome.—I entreat you do.

Lady Clarinda.—Well, I really have very little to say in his favour.

Captain Fitzchrome.—I do not wish to hear anything in his favour; and I rejoice to hear you say so, because——

Lady Clarinda.—Do not flatter yourself. If I take him, it will be to please my father, and to have a town and country-house, and plenty of servants, and a carriage and an opera-box, and make some of my acquaintance who have married for love, or for rank, or for anything but money, die for envy of my jewels. You do not think I would take him for himself. Why he is very smooth and spruce, as far as his dress goes; but as to his face, he looks as if he had tumbled headlong into a volcano, and been thrown up again among the cinders.

Captain Fitzchrome.—I cannot believe that, speaking thus of him, you mean to take him at all.

Lady Clarinda.—Oh! I am out of my teens. I have been very much in love; but now I am come to years of discretion, and must think, like other people, of settling myself advantageously. He was in love with a banker's daughter, and cast her off on her father's bankruptcy, and the poor girl has gone to hide herself in some wild place.

Captain Fitzchrome.—She must have a strange taste, if she pines for the loss of him.

Lady Clarinda.—They say he was good-looking, till his bubble-schemes, as they call them, stamped him with the physiognomy of a desperate gambler. I suspect he has still a *penchant* towards his first flame. If he takes me, it will be for my rank and connection, and the second seat of the borough of Rogueingrain. So we shall meet on equal terms, and shall enjoy all the blessedness of expecting nothing from each other.

Captain Fitzchrome.—You can expect no security with such an adventurer.

Lady Clarinda.—I shall have the security of a good settlement, and then if *andare al diavolo* be his destiny, he may go, you know, by himself. He is almost always dreaming and *distrait.* It is very likely that some great reverse is in store for him: but that will not concern me, you perceive.

Captain Fitzchrome.—You torture me, Clarinda, with the possibility.

Lady Clarinda.—Hush! Here is music to soothe your troubled spirit. Next to him, on this side, sits the dilettante composer, Mr. Trillo; they say his name was O'Trill, and he has taken the O from the beginning, and put it at the end. I do not know how this may be. He plays well on the violoncello, and better on the piano: sings agreeably; has a talent at verse-making, and improvises a song with some felicity. He is very agreeable company in the evening, with his instruments and music-books. He maintains that the sole end of all enlightened society is to get up a good opera, and laments that wealth, genius, and energy are squandered upon other pursuits, to the neglect of this one great matter.

Captain Fitzchrome.—That is a very pleasant fancy at any rate.

Lady Clarinda.—I assure you he has a great deal to say for it. Well, next to him again, is Dr. Morbific, who has been all over the world to prove that there is no such thing as contagion; and has inoculated himself with plague, yellow fever, and every variety of pestilence, and is still alive to tell the story. I am very shy of him, too; for I look on him as a walking phial of wrath, corked full of all infections, and not to be touched without extreme hazard.

Captain Fitzchrome.—This is the strangest fellow of all.

Lady Clarinda.—Next to him sits Mr. Philpot,* the geographer, who thinks of nothing but the heads and tails of rivers, and lays down the streams of Terra Incognita as accurately as if he had been there. He is a person of pleasant fancy, and makes a sort of fairy land of every country he touches, from the frozen ocean to the Deserts of Sahara.

Captain Fitzchrome.—How does he settle matters with Mr. Firedamp?

Lady Clarinda.—You see Mr. Firedamp has got as far as possible out of his way. Next to him is Sir Simon Steeltrap, of Steeltrap Lodge, Member for Crouching-Curtown, Justice of Peace for the county, and Lord of the United Manors of Springgun and Treadmill; a great preserver of game and public morals. By administering the laws which he assists in making, he disposes, at his pleasure, of the land and its live stock, including all the two-legged varieties, with and without feathers, in a circumference of several miles round Steeltrap Lodge. He has enclosed commons and woodlands;

* ΦΙΛοΠΟΤαμος. Fluvorium amans.

abolished cottage-gardens; taken the village cricket-ground into his own park, out of pure regard to the sanctity of Sunday; shut up footpaths and alehouses (all but those which belong to his electioneering friend, Mr. Quassia, the brewer); put down fairs and fiddlers; committed many poachers; shot a few; convicted one-third of the peasantry; suspected the rest; and passed nearly the whole of them through a wholesome course of prison discipline, which has finished their education at the expense of the county.

Captain Fitzchrome.—He is somewhat out of his element here: among such a diversity of opinions he will hear some he will not like.

Lady Clarinda.—It was rather ill-judged in Mr. Crotchet to invite him to-day. But the art of assorting company is above these *parvenus*. They invite a certain number of persons without considering how they harmonize with each other. Between Sir Simon and you is the Reverend Doctor Folliott. He is said to be an excellent scholar, and is fonder of books than the majority of his cloth; he is very fond, also, of the good things of this world. He is of an admirable temper, and says rude things in a pleasant half-earnest manner, that nobody can take offence with. And next to him, again, is one Captain Fitzchrome, who is very much in love with a certain person that does not mean to have anything to say to him, because she can better her fortune by taking somebody else.

Captain Fitzchrome.—And next to him, again, is the beautiful, the accomplished, the witty, the fascinating, the tormenting, Lady Clarinda, who traduces herself to the said captain by assertions which it would drive him cazy to believe.

Lady Clarinda.—Time will show, sir. And now we have gone the round of the table.

Captain Fitzchrome.—But I must say, though I know you had always a turn for sketching characters, you surprise me by your observation, and especially by your attention to opinions.

Lady Clarinda.—Well, I will tell you a secret: I am writing a novel.

Captain Fitzchrome.—A novel!

Lady Clarinda.—Yes, a novel. And I shall get a little finery by it: trinkets and fal-lals, which I cannot get from papa. You must know I have been reading several fashion-

able novels, the [illegible] and the [illegible] that, and I thought to myself why I [illegible] better than any of these myself. [illegible] I wrote a chapter [illegible] and sent them as a specimen to Mr. Puffall, the [illegible] telling him they were to be a part of the [illegible] or other, and he offered me. I will not say how much to finish it in three volumes, and let him pay all the newspapers for recommending it as the work of a lady of [illegible] who had made very free with the characters of her [illegible].

Captain [illegible] — [illegible]

Lady [illegible] — [illegible] Mr. Eavesdrop. But Mr. Puffall [illegible] say so.

Captain [illegible] — [illegible]

Lady [illegible] — [illegible] you may give [illegible] papers will [illegible] [illegible] a [illegible] to be [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Captain [illegible] be a [illegible]

Lady [illegible] novel [illegible] Mr. Puffall [illegible] it is every [illegible] is a very [illegible] sixty-[illegible] leap-year [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] BUTLER.

MRANY [illegible] and the [illegible] [illegible]

Mr. Crotchet, jun.—There is one point in which philosophers of all classes seem to be agreed; that they only want money to regenerate the world.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—No doubt of it. Nothing is so easy as to lay down the outlines of perfect society. There wants nothing but money to set it going. I will explain myself clearly and fully by reading a paper. (*Producing a large scroll.*) "In the infancy of society—"

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Pray, Mr. Mac Quedy, how is it that all gentlemen of your nation begin everything they write with the "infancy of society?"

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Eh, sir, it is the simplest way to begin at the beginning. "In the infancy of society, when government was invented to save a percentage; say two and a half per cent.—"

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—I will not say any such thing.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Well, say any percentage you please.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—I will not say any percentage at all.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—"On the principle of the division of labour—"

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Government was invented to spend a percentage.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—To save a percentage.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—No, sir, to spend a percentage; and a good deal more than two and a half per cent. Two hundred and fifty per cent.; that is intelligible.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—"In the infancy of society"—

Mr. Toogood.—Never mind the infancy of society. The question is of society in its maturity. Here is what it should be. (*Producing a paper.*) I have laid it down in a diagram.

Mr. Skionar.—Before we proceed to the question of government, we must nicely discriminate the boundaries of sense, understanding, and reason. Sense is a receptivity.—

Mr. Crotchet, jun.—We are proceeding too fast. Money being all that is wanted to regenerate society, I will put into the hands of this company a large sum for the purpose. Now let us see how to dispose of it.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—We will begin by taking a committee-room in London, where we will dine together once a week, to deliberate.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—If the money is to go in deliberative

dinners, you may set me down for a committee man and honorary caterer.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Next, you must all learn political economy, which I will teach you, very compendiously, in lectures over the bottle.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—I hate lectures over the bottle. But pray, sir, what is political economy?

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Political economy is to the state what domestic economy is to the family.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—No such thing, sir. In the family there is a *paterfamilias*, who regulates the distribution, and takes care that there shall be no such thing in the household as one dying of hunger while another dies of surfeit. In the state, it is all hunger at one end, and all surfeit at the other. Matchless claret, Mr. Crotchet.

Mr. Crotchet.—Vintage of fifteen, doctor.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—The family consumes, and so does the state.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Consumes, sir! Yes: but the mode, the proportions; there is the essential difference between the state and the family. Sir, I hate false analogies.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Well, sir, the analogy is not essential. Distribution will come under its proper head.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Come where it will, the distribution of the state is in no respect analogous to the distribution of the family. The *paterfamilias*, sir: the *paterfamilias*.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Well, sir, let that pass. The family consumes, and in order to consume, it must have supply.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Well, sir, Adam and Eve knew that when they delved and span.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Very true, sir (*reproducing his scroll*). In the infancy of society——"

Mr. Toogood.—The reverend gentleman has hit the nail on the head. It is the distribution that must be looked to: it is the *paterfamilias* that is wanting in the state. Now, here I have provided him. (*Reproducing his diagram.*)

Mr. Trillo.—Apply the money, sir, to building and endowing an opera-house, where the ancient altar of Bacchus may flourish, and justice may be done to sublime compositions. (*Producing a part of a manuscript opera.*)

Mr. Skionar.—No, sir, build *sacella* for transcendental ora-

cles to teach the world how to see through a glass darkly. (*Producing a scroll.*)

Mr. Trillo.—See through an opera-glass brightly.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—See through a wine-glass, full of claret: then you see both darkly and brightly. But, gentlemen, if you are all in the humour for reading papers, I will read you the first half of my next Sunday's sermon. (*Producing a paper.*)

Omnes.—No sermon! No sermon!

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Then I move that our respective papers be committed to our respective pockets.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Political economy is divided into two great branches, production and consumption.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Yes, sir; there are two great classes of men: those who produce much, and consume little; and those who consume much, and produce nothing. The *fruges consumere nati* have the best of it. Eh, captain! you remember the characteristics of a great man according to Aristophanes: ὅστις γε πίνειν οἶδε καὶ βίνειν μόνον. Ha! ha! ha! Well, captain, even in these tight-laced days, the obscurity of a learned language allows a little pleasantry.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Very true, sir: the pleasantry and the obscurity go together: they are all one, as it were;—to me, at any rate (*aside*).

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Now, sir—

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Pray, sir, let your science alone, or you will put me under the painful necessity of demolishing it bit by bit, as I have done your exordium. I will undertake it any morning; but it is too hard exercise after dinner.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Well, sir, in the meantime I hold my science established.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—And I hold it demolished.

Mr. Crotchet, jun.—Pray, gentlemen, pocket your manuscripts; fill your glasses, and consider what we shall do with our money.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Build lecture-rooms and schools for all.

Mr. Trillo.—Revive the Athenian theatre: regenerate the lyrical drama.

Mr. Toogood.—Build a grand co-operative parallelogram, with a steam-engine in the middle for a maid of all-work.

Mr. Firedamp.—Drain the country, and get rid of *malaria, by abolishing* duck-ponds.

Dr. Morbific.—Found a philanthropic college of anti-contagionists, where all the members shall be inoculated with the virus of all known diseases. Try the experiment on a grand scale.

Mr. Chainmail.—Build a great dining-hall: endow it with beef and ale, and hang the hall round with arms to defend the provisions.

Mr. Henbane.—Found a toxicological institution, for trying all poisons and antidotes. I myself have killed a frog twelve times, and brought him to life eleven; but the twelfth time he died. I have a phial of the drug which killed him, in my pocket, and shall not rest till I have discovered its antidote.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—I move that the last speaker be dispossessed of his phial, and that it be forthwith thrown into the Thames.

Mr. Henbane.—How, sir? my invaluable, and, in the present state of human knowledge, infallible poison?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Let the frogs have all the advantage of it.

Mr. Crotchet.—Consider, doctor, the fish might participate. Think of the salmon!

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Then let the owner's right-hand neighbour swallow it.

Mr. Eavesdrop.—Me, sir? What have I done, sir, that I am to be poisoned, sir!

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, you have published a character of your facetious friend, the Reverend Doctor F., wherein you have sketched off me; me, sir, even to my nose and wig. What business have the public with my nose and wig?

Mr. Eavesdrop.—Sir, it is all good-humoured: all in *bonhommie:* all friendly and complimentary.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, the bottle, *la Dive Bouteille*, is a recondite oracle which makes an Eleusinian temple of the circle in which it moves. He who reveals its mysteries must die. Therefore, let the dose be administered. *Fiat experimentum in animâ vili.*

Mr. Eavesdrop.—Sir, you are very facetious at my expense.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, you have been very unfacetious, very inficete at mine. You have dished me up, like a savory omelette, to gratify the appetite of the reading rabble for gossip. The next time, sir, I will respond with the *argumentum baculinum.* Print that, sir; put it on record as a promise

of the Rev. Doctor F., which shall be most faithfully kept, with an exemplary bamboo.

Mr. Eavesdrop.—Your cloth protects you, sir.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—My bamboo shall protect me, sir.

Mr. Crotchet.—Doctor! doctor, you are growing too polemical.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, my blood boils. What business have the public with my nose and wig?

Mr. Crotchet.—Doctor! doctor!

Mr. Crotchet, jun.—Pray, gentlemen, return to the point. How shall we employ our fund?

Mr. Philpot.—Surely in no way so beneficial as in exploring rivers. Send a fleet of steam-boats down the Niger, and another up the Nile. So shall you civilize Africa, and establish stocking factories in Abyssinia and Bambo.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—With all submission, breeches and petticoats must preccde stockings. Send out a crew of tailors. Try if the King of Bambo will invest in inexpressibles.

Mr. Crotchet, jun.—Gentlemen, it is not for partial, but for general benefit, that this fund is proposed: a grand and universally applicable scheme for the amelioration of the condition of man.

Several Voices.—That is my scheme. I have not heard a scheme but my own that has a grain of common sense.

Mr. Trillo.—Gentlemen, you inspire me. Your last exclamation runs itself into a chorus, and sets itself to music. Allow me to lead, and to hope for your voices in harmony.

After careful meditation,
And profound deliberation,
On the various pretty projects which have just been shown,
Not a scheme in agitation,
For the world's amelioration,
Has a grain of common sense in it, except my own.

Several Voices.—We are not disposed to join in any such chorus.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Well, of all these schemes, I am for Mr. Trillo's. Regenerate the Athenian theatre. My classical friend here, the captain, will vote with me.

Captain Fitzchrome.—I, sir? oh! of course, sir.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Surely, captain, I rely on you to uphold political economy.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Me, sir? oh! to be sure, sir.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Pray, sir, will political economy uphold the Athenian theatre?

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Surely not. It would be a very unproductive investment.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Then the captain votes against you. What, sir, did not the Athenians, the wisest of nations, appropriate to their theatre their most sacred and intangible fund? Did not they give to melopœia, choregraphy, and the sundry forms of didascalics, the precedence of all other matters, civil and military? Was it not their law, that even the proposal to divert this fund to any other purpose should be punished with death? But, sir, I further propose that the Athenian theatre being resuscitated, the admission shall be free to all who can expound the Greek choruses, constructively, mythologically, and metrically, and to none others. So shall all the world learn Greek: Greek, the Alpha and Omega of all knowledge. At him who sits not in the theatre, shall be pointed the finger of scorn: he shall be called in the highway of the city, "a fellow without Greek."

Mr. Trillo.—But the ladies, sir, the ladies.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Every man may take in a lady: and she who can construe and metricise a chorus, shall, if she so please, pass in by herself.

Mr. Trillo.—But, sir, you will shut me out of my own theatre. Let there at least be a double passport, Greek and Italian.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—No, sir; I am inexorable. No Greek, no theatre.

Mr. Trillo.—Sir, cannot consent to be shut out from my own theatre.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—You see how it is, Squire Crotchet the younger; you can scarcely find two to agree on a scheme, and no two of those can agree on the details. Keep your money in your pocket. And so ends the fund for regenerating the world.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Nay, by no means. We are all agreed on deliberative dinners.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Very true; we will dine and discuss. We will sing with Robin Hood, "If I drink water while this doth last;" and while it lasts we will have no adjournment, if not to the Athenian theatre.

Mr. Trillo.—Well, gentlemen, I hope this chorus at least will please you:

If I drink water while this doth last,
May I never again drink wine:
For how can a man, in his life of a span,
Do anything better than dine?
We'll dine and drink, and say if we think
That anything better can be;
And when we have dined, wish all mankind
May dine as well as we.

And though a good wish will fill no dish,
And brim no cup with sack,
Yet thoughts will spring, as the glasses ring,
To illume our studious track.
On the brilliant dreams of our hopeful schemes
The light of the flask shall shine;
And we'll sit till day, but we'll find the way
To drench the world with wine.

The schemes for the world's regeneration evaporated in a tumult of voices.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SLEEPING VENUS.

Quoth he: In all my life till now,
I ne'er saw so profane a show.—BUTLER.

THE library of Crotchet Castle was a large and well-furnished apartment, opening on one side into an ante-room, on the other into a music-room. It had several tables stationed at convenient distances; one consecrated to the novelties of literature, another to the novelties of embellishment; others unoccupied, and at the disposal of the company. The walls were covered with a copious collection of ancient and modern books; the ancient having been selected and arranged by the Reverend Doctor Folliott. In the ante-room were card-tables; in the music-room were various instruments, all popular operas, and all fashionable music. In this suite of apartments, and not in the drawing-room, were the evenings of Crotchet Castle usually passed.

The young ladies were in the music-room; Miss Crotchet at the piano, Lady Clarinda, at the harp, playing and oc-

casionally singing, at the suggestion of Mr. Trillo, portions of *Matilde di Shabran*. Lord Bossnowl was turning over the leaves for Miss Crotchet; the captain was performing the same office for Lady Clarinda, but with so much more attention to the lady than the book, that he often made sad work with the harmony, by turning over two leaves together. On these occasions Miss Crotchet paused, Lady Clarinda laughed, Mr. Trillo scolded, Lord Bossnowl yawned, the captain apologised, and the performance proceeded.

In the library, Mr. Mac Quedy was expounding political economy to the Reverend Doctor Folliott, who was *pro more* demolishing its doctrines *seriatim*.

Mr. Chainmail was in hot dispute with Mr. Skionar, touching the physical and moral well-being of man. Mr. Skionar was enforcing his friend Mr. Shantsee's views of moral discipline; maintaining that the sole thing needful for man in this world, was loyal and pious education; the giving men good books to read, and enough of the hornbook to read them; with a judicious interspersion of the lessons of Old Restraint, which was his poetic name for the parish stocks. Mr. Chainmail, on the other hand, stood up for the exclusive necessity of beef and ale, lodging and raiment, wife and children, courage to fight for them all, and armour wherewith to do so.

Mr. Henbane had got his face scratched, and his finger bitten, by the cat, in trying to catch her for a second experiment in killing and bringing to life; and Doctor Morbific was comforting him with a disquisition, to prove that there were only four animals having the power to communicate hydrophobia, of which the cat was one; and that it was not necessary that the animal should be in a rabid state, the nature of the wound being everything, and the idea of contagion a delusion. Mr. Henbane was listening very lugubriously to this dissertation.

Mr. Philpot had seized on Mr. Firedamp, and pinned him down to a map of Africa, on which he was tracing imaginary courses of mighty inland rivers, terminating in lakes and marshes, where they were finally evaporated by the heat of the sun; and Mr. Firedamp's hair was standing on end at the bare imagination of the mass of *malaria* that must be engendered by the operation. Mr. Toogood had begun explaining his diagrams to Sir Simon Steeltrap; but Sir Simon grew-

testy, and told Mr. Toogood that the promulgators of such doctrines ought to be consigned to the tread-mill. The philanthropist walked off from the country gentleman, and proceeded to hold forth to young Crotchet, who stood silent, as one who listens, but in reality without hearing a syllable. Mr. Crotchet, senior, as the master of the house, was left to entertain himself with his own meditations, till the Reverend Doctor Folliott tore himself from Mr. Mac Quedy, and proceeded to expostulate with Mr. Crotchet on a delicate topic.

There was an Italian painter, who obtained the name of *Il Brugatore*, by the superinduction of inexpressibles on the naked Apollos and Bacchuses of his betters. The fame of this worthy remained one and indivisible, till a set of heads, which had been, by a too common mistake of nature's journeymen, stuck upon magisterial shoulders, as the Corinthian capitals of "fair round bellies with fat capon lined," but which nature herself had intended for the noddles of porcelain mandarins, promulgated simultaneously from the east and the west of London, an order that no plaster-of-Paris Venus should appear in the streets without petticoats. Mr. Crotchet, on reading this order in the evening paper, which, by the postman's early arrival, was always laid on his breakfast-table, determined to fill his house with Venuses of all sizes and kinds. In pursuance of this resolution, came packages by water-carriage, containing an infinite variety of Venuses. There were the Medicean Venus, and the Bathing Venus; the Uranian Venus, and the Pandemian Venus; the Crouching Venus, and the Sleeping Venus; the Venus rising from the sea, the Venus with the apple of Paris, and the Venus with the armour of Mars.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott had been very much astonished at this unexpected display. Disposed, as he was, to hold that whatever had been in Greece was right, he was more than doubtful of the propriety of throwing open the classical *adytum* to the illiterate profane. Whether, in his interior mind, he was at all influenced either by the consideration that it would be for the credit of his cloth with some of his vice-suppressing neighbours, to be able to say that he had expostulated; or by curiosity, to try what sort of defence his city-bred friend, who knew the classics only by translations, and whose reason was always a little a-head of his knowledge, would make for his somewhat ostentatious display of libe-

rality in matters of taste, is a question on which the learned may differ: but after having duly deliberated on two full-sized casts of the Uranian and Pandemian Venus, in niches on each side of the chimney, and on three alabaster figures in glass cases, on the mantelpiece, he proceeded, peirastically, to open his fire.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—These little alabaster figures on the mantelpiece, Mr. Crotchet, and those large figures in the niches—may I take the liberty to ask you what they are intended to represent?

Mr. Crotchet.—Venus, sir; nothing more, sir; just Venus.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—May I ask you, sir, why they are there?

Mr. Crotchet.—To be looked at, sir; just to be looked at: the reason for most things in a gentleman's house being in it at all; from the paper on the walls, and the drapery of the curtains, even to the books in the library, of which the most essential part is the appearance of the back.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Very true, sir. As great philosophers hold that the *esse* of things is *percipi*, so a gentleman's furniture exists to be looked at. Nevertheless, sir, there are some things more fit to be looked at than others; for instance, there is nothing more fit to be looked at than the outside of a book. It is, as I may say from repeated experience, a pure and unmixed pleasure to have a goodly volume lying before you, and to know that you may open it if you please, and need not open it unless you please. It is a resource against *ennui*, if *ennui* should come upon you. To have the resource and not to feel the *ennui*, to enjoy your bottle in the present, and your book in the indefinite future, is a delightful condition of human existence. There is no place, in which a man can move or sit, in which the outside of a book can be otherwise than an innocent and becoming spectacle. Touching this matter, there cannot, I think, be two opinions. But with respect to your Venuses there can be, and indeed there are, two very distinct opinions. Now, sir, that little figure in the centre of the mantelpiece—as a grave *paterfamilias*, Mr. Crotchet, with a fair nubile daughter, whose eyes are like the fishpools of Heshbon—I would ask you if you hold that figure to be altogether delicate?

Mr. Crotchet.—The Sleeping Venus, sir? Nothing can be more delicate than the entire contour of the figure, the flow

of the hair on the shoulders and neck, the form of the feet and fingers. It is altogether a most delicate morsel.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Why, in that sense, perhaps, it is as delicate as whitebait in July. But the attitude, sir, the attitude.

Mr. Crotchet.—Nothing can be more natural, sir.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—That is the very thing, sir. It is too natural: too natural, sir: it lies for all the world like —— I make no doubt the pious cheesemonger, who recently broke its plaster fac-simile over the head of the itinerant vendor, was struck by a certain similitude to the position of his own sleeping beauty, and felt his noble wrath thereby justly aroused.

Mr. Crotchet.—Very likely, sir. In my opinion, the cheesemonger was a fool, and the justice who sided with him was a greater.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Fool, sir, is a harsh term: call not thy brother a fool?

Mr. Crotchet.—Sir, neither the cheesemonger nor the justice is a brother of mine.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, we are all brethren.

Mr. Crotchet.—Yes, sir, as the hangman is of the thief; the 'squire of the poacher; the judge of the libeller; the lawyer of his client; the statesman of his colleague; the bubble-blower of the bubble-buyer; the slave-driver of the negro; as these are brethren, so am I and the worthies in question.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—To be sure, sir, in these instances, and in many others, the term brother must be taken in its utmost latitude of interpretation: we are all brothers, nevertheless. But to return to the point. Now, these two large figures: one with drapery on the lower half of the body, and the other with no drapery at all: upon my word, sir, it matters not what godfathers and godmothers may have promised and vowed for the children of this world, touching the devil and other things to be renounced, if such figures as those are to be put before their eyes.

Mr. Crotchet.—Sir, the naked figure is the Pandemian Venus, and the half-draped figure is the Uranian Venus; and I say, sir, that figure realizes the finest imaginings of Plato, and is the personification of the most refined and exalted feeling of which the human mind is susceptible; the love of pure, ideal, intellectual beauty.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—I am aware, sir, that Plato, in his Symposium, discourseth very eloquently touching the Uranian and Pandemian Venus: but you must remember that, in our Universities, Plato is held to be little better than a misleader of youth; and they have shown their contempt for him, not only by never reading him (a mode of contempt in which they deal very largely), but even by never printing a complete edition of him; although they have printed many ancient books which nobody suspects to have been ever read on the spot, except by a person attached to the press, who is therefore emphatically called "the reader."

Mr. Crotchet.—Well, sir?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Why, sir, to "the reader" aforesaid (supposing either of our Universities to have printed an edition of Plato), or to any one else who can be supposed to have read Plato, or indeed to be ever likely to do so, I would very willingly show these figures; because to such they would, I grant you, be the outward and visible signs of poetical and philosophical ideas: but, to the multitude, the gross carnal multitude, they are but two beautiful women—one half undressed, and the other quite so.

Mr. Crotchet.—Then, sir, let the multitude look upon them and learn modesty.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—I must say that, if I wished my footman to learn modesty, I should not dream of sending him to school to a naked Venus.

Mr. Crotchet.—Sir, ancient sculpture is the true school of modesty. But where the Greeks had modesty, we have cant; where they had poetry, we have cant; where they had patriotism, we have cant; where they had anything that exalts, delights, or adorns humanity, we have nothing but cant, cant, cant. And, sir, to show my contempt for cant in all its shapes, I have adorned my house with the Greek Venus, in all her shapes, and am ready to fight her battle against all the societies that were ever instituted for the suppression of truth and beauty.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—My dear sir, I am afraid you are growing warm. Pray be cool. Nothing contributes so much to good digestion as to be perfectly cool after dinner.

Mr. Crotchet.—Sir, the Lacedæmonian virgins wrestled naked with young men: and they grew up, as the wise Ly-

curgus had foreseen, into the most modest of women, and the most exemplary of wives and mothers.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Very likely, sir, but the Athenian virgins did no such thing, and they grew up into wives who stayed at home—stayed at home, sir; and looked after the husband's dinner—his dinner, sir, you will please to observe.

Mr. Crotchet.—And what was the consequence of that, sir? that they were such very insipid persons that the husband would not go home to eat his dinner, but preferred the company of some Aspasia, or Lais.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Two very different persons, sir, give me leave to remark.

Mr. Crotchet.—Very likely, sir; but both too good to be married in Athens.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, Lais was a Corinthian.

Mr. Crotchet.—'Od's vengeance, sir, some Aspasia and any other Athenian name of the same sort of person you like——

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—I do not like the sort of person at all: the sort of person I like, as I have already implied, is a modest woman, who stays at home and looks after her husband's dinner.

Mr. Crotchet.—Well, sir, that was not the taste of the Athenians. They preferred the society of women who would not have made any scruple about sitting as models to Praxiteles; as you know, sir, very modest women in Italy did to Canova: one of whom, an Italian countess, being asked by an English lady, "How she could bear it?" answered, "Very well; there was a good fire in the room."

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, the English lady should have asked how the Italian lady's husband could bear it. The phials of my wrath would overflow if poor dear Mrs. Folliott ——: sir, in return for your story, I will tell you a story of my ancestor, Gilbert Folliott. The devil haunted him, as he did Saint Francis, in the likeness of a beautiful damsel; but all he could get from the exemplary Gilbert was an admonition to wear a stomacher and long petticoats.

Mr. Crotchet.—Sir, your story makes for my side of the question. It proves that the devil, in the likeness of a fair damsel, with short petticoats and no stomacher, was almost too much for Gilbert Folliott. The force of the spell was in the drapery.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Bless my soul, sir!

Mr. Crotchet.—Give me leave, sir. Diderot——

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Who was he, sir?

Mr. Crotchet.—Who was he, sir? The sublime philosopher, the father of the encyclopædia, of all the encyclopædias that have ever been printed.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Bless me, sir, a terrible progeny! they belong to the tribe of *Incubi*.

Mr. Crotchet.—The great philosopher, Diderot——

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, Diderot is not a man after my heart. Keep to the Greeks, if you please; albeit this Sleeping Venus is not an antique.

Mr. Crotchet.—Well, sir, the Greeks: why do we call the Elgin marbles inestimable? Simply because they are true to nature. And why are they so superior in that point to all modern works, with all our greater knowledge of anatomy? Why, sir, but because the Greeks, having no cant, had better opportunities of studying models?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, I deny our greater knowledge of anatomy. But I shall take the liberty to employ, on this occasion, the *argumentum ad hominem*. Would you have allowed Miss Crotchet to sit for a model to Canova?

Mr. Crotchet.—Yes, sir.

"God bless my soul, sir!" exclaimed the Reverend Doctor Folliott, throwing himself back into a chair, and flinging up his heels, with the premeditated design of giving emphasis to his exclamation: but, by miscalculating his *impetus*, he overbalanced his chair, and laid himself on the carpet in a right angle, of which his back was the base.

CHAPTER VIII.

SCIENCE AND CHARITY.

Chi sta nel mondo un par d'ore contento,
Nè gli vien tolta, ovver contaminata,
Quella sua pace in veruno momento,
Può dir che Giove drittamente il guata.

FORTEGUERRI.

THE Reverend Dr. Folliott took his departure about ten o'clock, to walk home to his vicarage. There was no moon; but the night was bright and clear, and afforded him as much light as he needed. He paused a moment by

the Roman Camp, to listen to the nightingale; repeated to himself a passage of Sophocles; proceeded through the park-gate, and entered the narrow lane that led to the village. He walked on in a very pleasant mood of the state called *reverie;* in which fish and wine, Greek and political economy, the Sleeping Venus he had left behind and poor dear Mrs. Folliott, to whose fond arms he was returning, passed as in a *camera obscura* over the tablets of his imagination. Presently, the image of Mr. Eavesdrop, with a printed sketch of the Reverend Doctor F., presented itself before him, and he began mechanically to flourish his bamboo. The movement was prompted by his good genius, for the uplifted bamboo received the blow of a ponderous cudgel, which was intended for his head. The reverend gentleman recoiled two or three paces, and saw before him a couple of ruffians, who were preparing to renew the attack, but whom, with two swings of his bamboo, he laid with cracked sconces on the earth, where he proceeded to deal with them like corn beneath the flail of the thresher. One of them drew a pistol, which went off in the very act of being struck aside by the bamboo, and lodged a bullet in the brain of the other. There was then only one enemy, who vainly struggled to rise, every effort being attended with a new and more signal prostration. The fellow roared for mercy. "Mercy, rascal!" cried the divine; "what mercy were you going to show me, villain? What! I warrant me, you thought it would be an easy matter, and no sin, to rob and murder a parson on his way home from dinner. You said to yourself, doubtless, 'We'll waylay the fat parson' (you irreverent knave) 'as he waddles home' (you disparaging ruffian), 'half-seas-over' (you calumnious vagabond)." And with every dyslogistic term, which he supposed had been applied to himself, he inflicted a new bruise on his rolling and roaring antagonist. "Ah, rogue!" he proceeded; "you can roar now, marauder; you were silent enough when you devoted my brains to dispersion under your cudgel. But seeing that I cannot bind you, and that I intend you not to escape, and that it would be dangerous to let you rise, I will disable you in all your members; I will contund you as Thestylis did strong-smelling herbs,* in the quality whereof you do most

* Thestylis . . . . .
. . . . herbas contundit olentes.
VIRG. Ecl. ii. 10, 11.

gravely partake, as my nose beareth testimony, ill weed that you are. I will beat you to a jelly, and I will then roll you into the ditch, to lie till the constable comes for you, thief."

"Hold! hold! reverend sir," exclaimed the penitent culprit, "I am disabled already in every finger, and in every joint. I will roll myself into the ditch, reverend sir."

"Stir not, rascal," returned the divine, "stir not so much as the quietest leaf above you, or my bamboo rebounds on your body like hail in a thunder-storm. Confess speedily, villain; are you simple thief, or would you have manufactured me into a subject, for the benefit of science? Ay, miscreant caitiff, you would have made me a subject for science, would you? You are a schoolmaster abroad, are you? You are marching with a detachment of the march of mind, are you? You are a member of the Steam Intellect Society, are you? You swear by the learned friend, do you?

"Oh, no! reverend sir," answered the criminal, "I am innocent of all these offences, whatever they are, reverend sir. The only friend I had in the world is lying dead beside me, reverend sir."

The reverend gentleman paused a moment, and leaned on his bamboo. The culprit, bruised as he was, sprang on his legs, and went off in double quick time. The doctor gave him chase, and had nearly brought him within arm's length, when the fellow turned at right angles, and sprang clean over a deep dry ditch. The divine, following with equal ardour, and less dexterity, went down over head and ears into a thicket of nettles. Emerging with much discomposure, he proceeded to the village, and roused the constable; but the constable found, on reaching the scene of action, that the dead man was gone, as well as his living accomplice.

"Oh, the monster!" exclaimed the Reverend Doctor Folliott, "he has made a subject for science of the only friend he had in the world." "Ay, my dear," he resumed, the next morning at breakfast, "if my old reading, and my early gymnastics (for, as the great Hermann says, before I was demulced by the Muses, I was *ferocis ingenii puer, et ad arma quam ad literas paratior**), had not imbued me indelibly with some of the holy rage of *Frère Jean des Entommeures*, I should

* "A boy of fierce disposition, more inclined to arms than to letters."—HERMANN'S *Dedication of Homer's Hymns to his Preceptor, Ilgen.*

be, at this moment, lying on the table of some flinty-hearted anatomist, who would have sliced and disjointed me as unscrupulously as I do these remnants of the capon and chine, wherewith you consoled yourself yesterday for my absence at dinner. Phew! I have a noble thirst upon me, which I will quench with floods of tea."

The reverend gentleman was interrupted by a messenger, who informed him that the Charity Commissioners requested his presence at the inn, where they were holding a sitting.

"The Charity Commissioners!" exclaimed the reverend gentleman, "who on earth are they?"

The messenger could not inform him, and the reverend gentleman took his hat and stick, and proceeded to the inn.

On entering the best parlour, he saw three well-dressed and bulky gentlemen sitting at a table, and a fourth officiating as clerk, with an open book before him, and a pen in his hand. The churchwardens, who had been also summoned, were already in attendance.

The chief commissioner politely requested the Reverend Doctor Folliott to be seated; and after the usual meteorological preliminaries had been settled by a resolution, *nem. con.*, that it was a fine day but very hot, the chief commissioner stated, that in virtue of the commission of Parliament, which they had the honour to hold, they were now to inquire into the state of the public charities of this village.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—The state of the public charities, sir, is exceedingly simple. There are none. The charities here are all private, and so private that I for one know nothing of them.

First Commisssioner.—We have been informed, sir, that there is an annual rent charged on the land of Hautbois, for the endowment and repair of an almshouse.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Hautbois! Hautbois!

First Commissioner.—The manorial farm of Hautbois, now occupied by Farmer Seedling, is charged with the endowment and maintenance of an almshouse.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott (to the churchwarden).—How is this, Mr. Bluenose?

First Churchwarden.—I really do not know, sir. What say you, Mr. Appletwig?

Mr. Appletwig (parish clerk and schoolmaster; an old man). *I do* remember, gentlemen, to have been informed, that there

did stand at the end of the village a ruined cottage, which had once been an almshouse, which was endowed and maintained, by an annual revenue of a mark and a half, or one pound sterling, charged some centuries ago on the farm of Hautbois; but the means, by the progress of time, having become inadequate to the end, the almshouse tumbled to pieces.

First Commissioner.—But this is a right which cannot be abrogated by desuetude, and the sum of one pound per annum is still chargeable for charitable purposes on the manorial farm of Hautbois.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Very well, sir.

Mr. Appletwig.—But sir, the one pound per annum is still received by the parish, but was long ago, by an unanimous vote in open vestry, given to the minister.

The Three Commissioners (*unâ voce*).—The minister!

First Commissioner.—This is an unjustifiable proceeding.

Second Commissioner.—A misappropriation of a public fund.

Third Commissioner.—A flagrant perversion of a charitable donation.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—God bless my soul, gentlemen! I know nothing of this matter. How is this, Mr. Bluenose? Do I receive this one pound per annum?

First Churchwarden.—Really, sir, I know no more about it than you do.

Mr. Appletwig.—You certainly receive it, sir. It was voted to one of your predecessors. Farmer Seedling lumps it in with his tithes.

First Commissioner.—Lumps it in, sir! Lump in a charitable donation!

Second and Third Commissioner.—Oh-oh oh-h-h!

First Commissioner.—Reverend sir, and gentlemen, officers of this parish, we are under the necessity of admonishing you that this is a most improper proceeding; and you are hereby duly admonished accordingly. Make a record, Mr. Milky.

Mr. Milky (*writing*).—The clergyman and churchwardens of the village of Hm-m-m-m gravely admonished. Hm-m-m-m.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Is that all, gentlemen?

The Commissioners.—That is all, sir, and we wish you a good-morning.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—A very good-morning to you, gentlemen.

"What in the name of all that is wonderful, Mr. Bluenose," said the Rev. Dr. Folliott, as he walked out of the inn—"what in the name of all that is wonderful can those fellows mean? They have come here in a chaise and four, to make a fuss about a pound per annum, which, after all, they leave as it was. I wonder who pays them for their trouble, and how much."

Mr. Appletwig.—The public pay for it, sir. It is a job of the learned friend whom you admire so much. It makes away with public money in salaries, and private money in lawsuits, and does no particle of good to any living soul.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Ay, ay, Mr. Appletwig; that is just the sort of public service to be looked for from the learned friend. Oh, the learned friend! the learned friend! He is the evil genius of everything that falls in his way.

The reverend doctor walked off to Crotchet Castle, to narrate his misadventures, and exhale his budget of grievances on Mr. Mac Quedy, whom he considered a ringleader of the march of the mind.

CHAPTER IX.

THE VOYAGE.

Οἱ μὲν ἔπειτ' ἀναβάντες ἐπέπλεον ὑγρὰ κέλευθα.
Mounting the bark, they cleft the watery ways.—HOMER.

FOUR beautiful cabined pinnaces, one for the ladies, one for the gentlemen, one for kitchen and servants, one for a dining-room and band of music, weighed anchor, on a fine July morning, from below Crotchet Castle, and were towed merrily, by strong trotting horses, against the stream of the Thames. They passed from the district of chalk, successively into the districts of clay, of sand-rock, of oolite, and so forth. Sometimes they dined in their floating dining-room, sometimes in tents, which they pitched on the dry, smooth-shaven green of a newly-mown meadow; sometimes they left their vessels to see sights in the vicinity; sometimes they passed a day or two in a comfortable inn.

At Oxford, they walked about to see the curiosities of architecture, painted windows, and undisturbed libraries. The Reverend Doctor Folliott laid a wager with Mr. Crotchet "that in all their perlustrations they would not find a man reading," and won it. "Ay, sir," said the reverend gentleman, "this is still a seat of learning, on the principle of—once a captain always a captain. We may well ask, in these great reservoirs of books whereof no man ever draws a sluice, *Quorsum pertinuit stipare Platona Menandro?** What is done here for the classics? Reprinting German editions on better paper! A great boast, verily! What for mathematics? What for metaphysics? What for history? What for anything worth knowing? This was a seat of learning in the days of Friar Bacon. But the friar is gone, and his learning with him. Nothing of him is left but the immortal nose, which, when his brazen head had tumbled to pieces, crying "Time's past," was the only palpable fragment among its minutely pulverized atoms, and which is still resplendent over the portals of its cognominal college. That nose, sir, is the only thing to which I shall take off my hat, in all this Babylon of buried literature.

Mr. Crotchet.—But, doctor, it is something to have a great reservoir of learning, at which some may draw if they please.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—But, here, good care is taken that nobody shall please. If even a small drop from the sacred fountain, πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβάς, as Callimachus has it, were carried off by any one, it would be evidence of something to hope for. But the system of dissuasion from all good learning is brought here to a pitch of perfection that baffles the keenest aspirant. I run over to myself the names of the scholars of Germany, a glorious catalogue! but ask for those of Oxford—Where are they? The echoes of their courts, as vacant as their heads, will answer, Where are they? The tree shall be known by its fruit; and seeing that this great tree, with all its specious seeming, brings forth no fruit, I do denounce it as a barren fig.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—I shall set you right on this point. We do nothing without motives. If learning get nothing but honour, and very little of that; and if the good things of this world, which ought to be the rewards of learning, become the mere gifts of self-interested patronage; you must

* Wherefore is Plato on Menander piled?—HOR. *Sat.* ii. 3, 11.

not wonder if, in the finishing of education, the science which takes precedence of all others should be the science of currying favour.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Very true, sir. Education is well-finished, for all worldly purposes, when the head is brought into the state whereinto I am accustomed to bring a marrow-bone when it has been set before me on a toast, with a white napkin wrapped round it. Nothing trundles along the high road of preferment so trimly as a well-biassed sconce, picked clean within, and polished without; *totus teres atque rotundus.** The perfection of the finishing lies in the bias, which keeps it trundling in the given direction. There is good and sufficient reason for the fig being barren, but it is not therefore the less a barren fig.

At Godstow, they gathered hazel on the grave of Rosamond; and, proceeding on their voyage, fell into a discussion on legendary histories.

Lady Clarinda.—History is but a tiresome thing in itself; it becomes more agreeable the more romance is mixed up with it. The great enchanter has made me learn many things which I should never have dreamed of studying, if they had not come to me in the form of amusement.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—What enchanter is that? There are two enchanters: he of the North, and he of the South.

Mr. Trillo.—Rossini?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Ay, there is another enchanter. But I mean the great enchanter of Covent Garden: he who, for more than a quarter of a century, has produced two pantomimes a year, to the delight of children of all ages, including myself at all ages. That is the enchanter for me. I am for the pantomimes. All the northern enchanter's romances put together would not furnish materials for half the southern enchanter's pantomimes.

Lady Clarinda.—Surely you do not class literature with pantomime?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—In these cases I do. They are both one, with a slight difference. The one is the literature of pantomime, the other is the pantomime of literature. There is the same variety of character, the same diversity of story, the same copiousness of incident, the same research into costume, the same display of

* All smooth and round.

heraldry, falconry, minstrelsy, scenery, monkery, witchery, devilry, robbery, poachery, piracy, fishery, gipsy-astrology, demonology, architecture, fortification, castrametation, navigation; the same running base of love and battle. The main difference is, that the one set of amusing fictions is told in music and action; the other in all the worst dialects of the English language. As to any sentence worth remembering, any moral or political truth, anything having a tendency, however remote, to make men wiser or better, to make them think, to make them even think of thinking; they are both precisely alike: *nuspiam, nequaquam, nullibi, nullimodis.*

Lady Clarinda.—Very amusing, however.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Very amusing, very amusing.

Mr. Chainmail.—My quarrel with the northern enchanter is, that he has grossly misrepresented the twelfth century.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—He has misrepresented everything, or he would not have been very amusing. Sober truth is but dull matter to the reading rabble. The angler, who puts not on his hook the bait that best pleases the fish, may sit all day on the bank without catching a gudgeon.*

Mr. Mac Quedy.—But how do you mean that he has misrepresented the twelfth century? By exhibiting some of its knights and ladies in the colours of refinement and virtue, seeing that they were all no better than ruffians, and something else that shall be nameless?

Mr. Chainmail.—By no means. By depicting them as much worse than they were, not, as you suppose, much better. No one would infer from his pictures that theirs was a much better state of society than this which we live in.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—No, nor was it. It was a period of brutality, ignorance, fanaticism, and tyranny; when the land was covered with castles, and every castle contained a gang of banditti, headed by a titled robber, who levied contributions with fire and sword; plundering, torturing, ravishing, burying his captives in loathsome dungeons, and broiling them on gridirons, to force from them the surrender of every particle of treasure which he suspected them of possessing; and fighting every now and then with the neighbouring lords, his conterminal bandits, for the right of marauding on the

* Eloquentiæ magister, nisi, tamquam piscator, eam imposuerit hamis escam quam scierit appetituros esse pisciculos, sine spe prædræ moratur in scopulo.—PETRONIUS ARBITER.

boundaries. This was the twelfth century, as depicted by all contemporary historians and poets.

Mr. Chainmail.—No, sir. Weigh the evidence of specific facts; you will find more good than evil. Who was England's greatest hero; the mirror of chivalry, the pattern of honour, the fountain of generosity, the model to all succeeding ages of military glory? Richard the First. There is a king of the twelfth century. What was the first step of liberty? Magna Charta. That was the best thing ever done by lords. There are lords of the twelfth century. You must remember, too, that these lords were petty princes, and made war on each other as legitimately as the heads of larger communities did or do. For their system of revenue, it was, to be sure, more rough and summary than that which has succeeded it, but it was certainly less searching and less productive. And as to the people, I content myself with these great points: that every man was armed, every man was a good archer, every man could and would fight effectively with sword or pike, or even with oaken cudgel: no man would live quietly without beef and ale; if he had them not, he fought till he either got them, or was put out of condition to want them. They were not, and could not be, subjected to that powerful pressure of all the other classes of society, combined by gunpowder, steam, and *fiscality*, which has brought them to that dismal degradation in which we see them now. And there are the people of the twelfth century.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—As to your king, the enchanter has done him ample justice, even in your own view. As to your lords and their ladies, he has drawn them too favourably, given them too many of the false colours of chivalry, thrown too attractive a light on their abominable doings. As to the people, he keeps them so much in the background, that he can hardly be said to have represented them at all, much less misrepresented them, which indeed he could scarcely do, seeing that, by your own showing, they were all thieves, ready to knock down any man for what they could not come by honestly.

Mr. Chainmail.—No, sir. They could come honestly by beef and ale, while they were left to their simple industry. When oppression interfered with them in that, then they stood on the defensive, and fought for what they were not permitted to come by quietly.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—If A, being aggrieved by B, knocks down C, do you call that standing on the defensive?

Mr. Chainmail.—That depends on who or what C is.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Gentlemen, you will never settle this controversy, till you have first settled what is good for man in this world; the great question, *de finibus*, which has puzzled all philosophers. If the enchanter has represented the twelfth century too brightly for one, and too darkly for the other of you, I should say, as an impartial man, he has represented it fairly. My quarrel with him is, that his works contain nothing worth quoting; and a book that furnishes no quotations, is, *me judice*, no book—it is a plaything. There is no question about the amusement—amusement of multitudes; but if he who amuses us most is to be our enchanter κατ' ἐξοχήν, then my enchanter is the enchanter of Covent Garden.

CHAPTER X.

THE VOYAGE, CONTINUED.

Continuant nostre routte, navigasmes par trois jours sans rien descouvrir. RABELAIS.

"THERE is a beautiful structure," said Mr. Chainmail, as they glided by Lechlade Church; "a subject for the pencil, Captain. It is a question worth asking, Mr. Mac Quedy, whether the religious spirit which reared these edifices, and connected with them everywhere an asylum for misfortune and a provision for poverty, was not better than the commercial spirit, which has turned all the business of modern life into schemes of profit, and processes of fraud and extortion. I do not see, in all your boasted improvements, any compensation for the religious charity of the twelfth century. I do not see any compensation for that kindly feeling which, within their own little communities, bound the several classes of society together, while full scope was left for the development of natural character, wherein individuals differed as conspicuously as in costume. Now, we all wear one conventional dress, one conventional face; we have no bond of union, but pecuniary interest; we talk any thing that comes uppermost, for talking's sake, and without expect-

ing to be believed; we have no nature, no simplicity, no picturesqueness: everything about us is as artificial and as complicated as our steam-machinery: our poetry is a kaleidoscope of false imagery, expressing no real feeling, portraying no real existence. I do not see any compensation for the poetry of the twelfth century."

Mr. Mac Quedy.—I wonder to hear you, Mr. Chainmail, talking of the religious charity of a set of lazy monks and beggarly friars, who were much more occupied with taking than giving; of whom, those who were in earnest did nothing but make themselves, and everybody about them, miserable, with fastings, and penances, and other such trash; and those who were not, did nothing but guzzle and royster, and, having no wives of their own, took very unbecoming liberties with those of honester men. And as to your poetry of the twelfth century, it is not good for much.

Mr. Chainmail.—It has, at any rate, what ours wants, truth to nature, and simplicity of diction. The poetry, which was addressed to the people of the dark ages, pleased in proportion to the truth with which it depicted familiar images, and to their natural connection with the time and place to which they were assigned. In the poetry of our enlightened times, the characteristics of all seasons, soils, and climates, may be blended together, with much benefit to the author's fame as an original genius. The cowslip of a civic poet is always in blossom, his fern is always in full feather; he gathers the celandine, the primrose, the heath-flower, the jasmine, and the chrysanthemum, all on the same day, and from the same spot: his nightingale sings all the year round, his moon is always full, his cygnet is as white as his swan, his cedar is as tremulous as his aspen, and his poplar as embowering as his beech. Thus all nature marches with the march of mind; but, among barbarians, instead of mead and wine, and the best seat by the fire, the reward of such a genius would have been, to be summarily turned out of doors in the snow, to meditate on the difference between day and night, and between December and July. It is an age of liberality, indeed, when not to know an oak from a burdock is no disqualification for sylvan minstrelsy. I am for truth and simplicity.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Let him who loves them read Greek: Greek, Greek, Greek.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—If he can, sir.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Very true, sir; if he can. Here is the captain, who can. But I think he must have finished his education at some very rigid college, where a quotation, or any other overt act showing acquaintance with classical literature, was visited with a severe penalty. For my part, I make it my boast that I was not to be so subdued. I could not be abated of a single quotation by all the bumpers in which I was fined.

In this manner they glided over the face of the waters, discussing everything and settling nothing. Mr. Mac Quedy and the Reverend Doctor Foliott had many digladiations on political economy: wherein, each in his own view, Doctor Folliott demolished Mr. Mac Quedy's science, and Mr. Mac Quedy demolished Doctor Folliott's objections.

We would print these dialogues if we thought any one would read them: but the world is not yet ripe for this *haute sagesse Pantagrueline*. We must, therefore, content ourselves with an *échantillon* of one of the Reverend Doctor's perorations.

"You have given the name of a science to what is yet an imperfect inquiry; and the upshot of your so-called science is this, that you increase the wealth of a nation by increasing in it the quantity of things which are produced by labour: no matter what they are, no matter how produced, no matter how distributed. The greater the quantity of labour that has gone to the production of the quantity of things in a community, the richer is the community. That is your doctrine. Now, I say, if this be so, riches are not the object for a community to aim at. I say, the nation is best off, in relation to other nations, which has the greatest quantity of the common necessaries of life distributed among the greatest number of persons; which has the greatest number of honest hearts and stout arms united in a common interest, willing to offend no one, but ready to fight in defence of their own community against all the rest of the world, because they have something in it worth fighting for. The moment you admit that one class of things, without any reference to what they respectively cost, is better worth having than another; that a smaller commercial value, with one mode of distribution, is better than a

greater commercial value, with another mode of distribution; the whole of that curious fabric of postulates and dogmas, which you call the science of political economy, and which I call *politicæ œconomiæ inscientia*, tumbles to pieces."

Mr. Toogood agreed with Mr. Chainmail against Mr. Mac Quedy, that the existing state of society was worse than that of the twelfth century; but he agreed with Mr. Mac Quedy against Mr. Chainmail, that it was in progress to something much better than either—to which "something much better" Mr. Toogood and Mr. Mac Quedy attached two very different meanings.

Mr. Chainmail fought with Doctor Folliott the battle of the romantic against the classical in poetry; and Mr. Skionar contended with Mr. Mac Quedy for intuition and synthesis, against analysis and induction in philosophy.

Mr. Philpot would lie along for hours, listening to the gurgling of the water round the prow, and would occasionally edify the company with speculations on the great changes that would be effected in the world by the steam-navigation of rivers: sketching the course of a steam-boat up and down some mighty stream which civilization had either never visited, or long since deserted; the Missouri and the Columbia, the Oroonoko and the Amazon, the Nile and the Niger, the Euphrates and the Tigris, the Oxus and the Indus, the Ganges and the Hoangho; under the overcanopying forests of the new, or by the long-silent ruins of the ancient world; through the shapeless mounds of Babylon, or the gigantic temples of Thebes.

Mr. Trillo went on with the composition of his opera, and took the opinions of the young ladies on every step in its progress; occasionally regaling the company with specimens, and wondering at the blindness of Mr. Mac Quedy, who could not, or would not see that an opera in perfection, being the union of all the beautiful arts—music, painting, dancing, poetry—exhibiting female beauty in its most attractive aspects, and in its most becoming costume—was, according to the well-known precept, *Ingenuas didicisse*, etc., the most efficient instrument of civilization, and ought to take precedence of all other pursuits in the minds of true philanthropists. The Reverend Doctor Folliott, on these occasions, never failed to say a word or two on Mr. Trillo's side, derived from the practice of the Athenians, and from the combination, in their

theatre, of all the beautiful arts, in a degree of perfection unknown to the modern world.

Leaving Lechlade, they entered the canal that connects the Thames with the Severn; ascended by many locks; passed, by a tunnel three miles long, through the bowels of Sapperton Hill; agreed unanimously that the greatest pleasure derivable from visiting a cavern of any sort was that of getting out of it; descended, by many locks again, through the valley of Stroud into the Severn; continued their navigation into the Ellesmere canal; moored their pinnaces in the vale of Llangollen by the aqueduct of Pontycysyllty; and determined to pass some days in inspecting the scenery, before commencing their homeward voyage.

The captain omitted no opportunity of pressing his suit on Lady Clarinda, but could never draw from her any reply but the same doctrines of worldly wisdom, delivered in a tone of *badinage*, mixed with a certain kindness of manner that induced him to hope she was not in earnest.

But the morning after they had anchored under the hills of the Dee—whether the lady had reflected more seriously than usual, or was somewhat less in good-humour than usual, or the captain was more pressing than usual—she said to him, "It must not be, Captain Fitzchrome; 'the course of true love never did run smooth:' my father must keep his borough, and I must have a town house and a country house, and an opera-box and a carriage. It is not well for either of us that we should flirt any longer: 'I must be cruel only to be kind.' Be satisfied with the assurance that you alone, of all men, have ever broken my rest. To be sure, it was only for about three nights in all; but that is too much."

The captain had *le cœur navré*. He took his portfolio under his arm, made up the little *valise* of a pedestrian, and, without saying a word to any one, wandered off at random among the mountains.

After the lapse of a day or two, the captain was missed, and every one marvelled what was become of him. Mr. Philpot thought he must have been exploring a river, and fallen in and got drowned in the process. Mr. Firedamp had no doubt he had been crossing a mountain bog, and had been suddenly deprived of life by the exhalations of marsh miasmata. Mr. Henbane deemed it probable that he had been tempted in some wood by the large black brilliant berries of the *Atropa*

Belladonna, or deadly nightshade; and lamented that he had not been by, to administer an infallible antidote. Mr. Eavesdrop hoped the particulars of his fate would be ascertained; and asked if any one present could help him to any authentic anecdotes of their departed friend. The Reverend Doctor Folliott proposed that an inquiry should be instituted, as to whether the march of intellect had reached that neighbourhood; as, if so, the captain had probably been made a subject for science. Mr. Mac Quedy said it was no such great matter to ascertain the precise mode in which the surplus population was diminished by one. Mr. Toogood asseverated that there was no such thing as surplus population, and that the land, properly managed, would maintain twenty times its present inhabitants: and hereupon they fell into a disputation.

Lady Clarinda did not doubt that the captain had gone away designedly: she missed him more than she could have anticipated; and wished she had at least postponed her last piece of cruelty till the completion of their homeward voyage.

CHAPTER XI.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"Base is the slave that pays."—ANCIENT PISTOL.

THE captain was neither drowned nor poisoned, neither miasmatized nor anatomised. But, before we proceed to account for him, we must look back to a young lady, of whom some little notice was taken in the first chapter; and who, though she has since been out of sight, has never with us been out of mind; Miss Susannah Touchandgo, the forsaken of the junior Crotchet, whom we left an inmate of a solitary farm, in one of the deep valleys under the cloudcapt summits of Meirion, comforting her wounded spirit with air and exercise, rustic cheer, music, painting, and poetry, and the prattle of the little Ap Llymrys.

One evening, after an interval of anxious expectation, the farmer, returning from market, brought for her two letters, of which the contents were these:—

"*Dotandcarryonetown,*
State of Apolidraskiana:
April 1. 18 . .

"My Dear Child.

"I am anxious to learn what are your present position, intention, and prospects. The fairies who dropped gold in your shoe, on the morning when I ceased to be a respectable man in London, will soon find a talismanic channel for transmitting you a stocking full of dollars, which will fit the shoe, as well as the foot of Cinderella fitted her slipper. I am happy to say I am again become a respectable man. It was always my ambition to be a respectable man; and I am a very respectable man here, in this new township of a new state, where I have purchased five thousand acres of land, at two dollars an acre, hard cash, and established a very flourishing bank. The notes of Touchandgo and Company, soft cash, are now the exclusive currency of all this vicinity. This is the land in which all men flourish; but there are three classes of men who flourish especially—Methodist-preachers, slave-drivers, and paper-money manufacturers; and as one of the latter, I have just painted the word 'Bank' on a fine slab of maple, which was green and growing when I arrived, and have discounted for the settlers, in my own currency, sundry bills, which are to be paid when the proceeds of the crop they have just sown shall return from New Orleans; so that my notes are the representatives of vegetation that is to be, and I am accordingly a capitalist of the first magnitude. The people here know very well that I ran away from London, but the most of them have run away from some place or other; and they have a great respect for me, because they think I ran away with something worth taking, which few of them had the luck or the wit to do. This gives them confidence in my resources, at the same time that, as there is nothing portable in the settlement except my own notes, they have no fear that I shall run away with them. They know I am thoroughly conversant with the principles of banking; and as they have plenty of industry, no lack of sharpness, and abundance of land, they wanted nothing but capital to organize a flourishing settlement; and this capital I have manufactured to the extent required, at the expense of a small importation of pens, ink, and paper, and two or three inimitable [illegible]. I have abundance here of all good things, [illegible]

included; for I really cannot see that I have done any wrong. This was my position: I owed half a million of money; and I had a trifle in my pocket. It was clear that this trifle could never find its way to the right owner. The question was, whether I should keep it, and live like a gentleman; or hand it over to lawyers and commissioners of bankruptcy, and die like a dog on a dunghill. If I could have thought that the said lawyers, etc., had a better title to it than myself, I might have hesitated; but, as such title was not apparent to my satisfaction, I decided the question in my own favour; the right owners, as I have already said, being out of the question altogether. I have always taken scientific views of morals and politics, a habit from which I derive much comfort under existing circumstances.

"I hope you adhere to your music, though I cannot hope again to accompany your harp with my flute. My last *andante* movement was too *forte* for those whom it took by surprise. Let not your *allegro vivace* be damped by young Crotchet's desertion, which, though I have not heard it, I take for granted. He is, like myself, a scientific politician, and has an eye as keen as a needle, to his own interest. He has had good luck so far, and is gorgeous in the spoils of many gulls; but I think the Polar Basin and Walrus Company will be too much for him yet. There has been a splendid outlay on credit; and he is the only man, of the original parties concerned, of whom his majesty's sheriffs could give any account.

"I will not ask you to come here. There is no husband for you. The men smoke, drink, and fight, and break more of their own heads than of girls' hearts. Those among them who are musical sing nothing but psalms. They are excellent fellows in their way, but you would not like them.

"*Au reste*, here are no rents, no taxes, no poor-rates, no tithes, no church-establishment, no routs, no clubs, no rotten boroughs, no operas, no concerts, no theatres, no beggars, no thieves, no king, no lords, no ladies, and only one gentleman, videlicet, your loving father,

"TIMOTHY TOUCHANDGO.

"P.S.—I send you one of my notes; I can afford to part with it. If you are accused of receiving money from me, you may pay it over to my assignees. Robthetill continues to be

my factotum; I say no more of him in this place: he will give you an account of himself."

"*Dotandcarryonetown, etc.*

"DEAR MISS,

"Mr. Touchandgo will have told you of our arrival here, of our setting up a bank, and so forth. We came here in a tilted waggon, which served us for parlour, kitchen, and all. We soon got up a log-house; and, unluckily, we as soon got it down again, for the first fire we made in it burnt down house and all. However, our second experiment was more fortunate; and we are pretty well lodged in a house of three rooms on a floor; I should say the floor, for there is but one.

"This new state is free to hold slaves; all the new states have not this privilege: Mr. Touchandgo has bought some, and they are building him a villa. Mr. Touchandgo is in a thriving way, but he is not happy here: he longs for parties and concerts, and a seat in Congress. He thinks it very hard that he cannot buy one with his own coinage, as he used to do in England. Besides, he is afraid of the regulators, who, if they do not like a man's character, wait upon him and flog him, doubling the dose at stated intervals, till he takes himself off. He does not like this system of administering justice: though I think he has nothing to fear from it. He has the character of having money, which is the best of all characters here, as at home. He lets his old English prejudices influence his opinions of his new neighbours; but I assure you they have many virtues. Though they do keep slaves, they are all ready to fight for their own liberty; and I should not like to be an enemy within reach of one of their rifles. When I say enemy, I include bailiff in the term. One was shot not long ago. There was a trial; the jury gave two dollars damages; the judge said they must find guilty or not guilty; but the counsel for the defendant (they would not call him prisoner), offered to fight the judge upon the point: and as this was said literally, not metaphorically, and the counsel was a stout fellow, the judge gave in. The two dollars damages were not paid after all; for the defendant challenged the foreman to box for double or quits, and the foreman was beaten. The folks in New York made a great outcry about it, but here it was considered all as it should be. So you see, Miss, justice, liberty, and everything else of that kind, are

different in different places, just as suits the convenience of those who have the sword in their own hands. Hoping to hear of your health and happiness, I remain,

"Dear Miss, your dutiful servant,

"RODERICK ROBTHETILL."

Miss Touchandgo replied as follows to the first of these letters :—

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I am sure you have the best of hearts, and I have no doubt you have acted with the best intentions. My lover, or I should rather say, my fortune's lover, has indeed forsaken me. I cannot say I did not feel it; indeed, I cried very much; and the altered looks of people who used to be so delighted to see me, really annoyed me so that I determined to change the scene altogether. I have come into Wales, and am boarding with a farmer and his wife. Their stock of English is very small, but I managed to agree with them; and they have four of the sweetest children I ever saw, to whom I teach all I know, and I manage to pick up some Welsh. I have puzzled out a little song, which I think very pretty; I have translated it into English, and I send it you with the original air. You shall play it on your flute at eight o'clock every Saturday evening, and I will play and sing it at the same time, and I will fancy that I hear my dear papa accompanying me.

"The people in London said very unkind things of you: they hurt me very much at the time; but now I am out of their way, I do not seem to think their opinion of much consequence. I am sure, when I recollect, at leisure, everything I have seen and heard among them, I cannot make out what they do that is so virtuous as to set them up for judges of morals. And I am sure they never speak the truth about anything, and there is no sincerity in either their love or their friendship. An old Welsh bard here, who wears a waistcoat embroidered with leeks, and is called the Green Bard of Cadair Idris, says the Scotch would be the best people in the world if there was nobody but themselves to give them a character; and so, I think, would the Londoners. I hate the very thought of them, for I do believe they would have broken my heart if I had not got out of their way.

Now I shall write you another letter very soon, and describe to you the country, and the people, and the children, and how I amuse myself, and every thing that I think you will like to hear about: and when I seal this letter, I shall drop a kiss on the cover.

"Your loving daughter,
"SUSANNAH TOUCHANDGO.

"P.S.—Tell Mr. Robthetill I will write to him in a day or two. This is the little song I spoke of:—

"Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,
My heart is gone, far, far from me;
And ever on its track will flee
My thoughts, my dreams, beyond the sea.

Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,
The swallow wanders fast and free:
Oh, happy bird, were I like thee,
I, too, would fly beyond the sea.

Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,
Are kindly hearts and social glee:
But here for me they may not be:
My heart is gone beyond the sea."

CHAPTER XII.

THE MOUNTAIN INN.

Ὡς ἡδὺ τῷ μισοῦντι τοὺς φαύλους τρόπους
Ἐρημία.

How sweet to minds that love not sordid ways
Is solitude!—MENANDER.

THE captain wandered despondingly up and down hill for several days, passing many hours of each in sitting on rocks; making, almost mechanically, sketches of waterfalls, and mountain pools; taking care, nevertheless, to be always before night-fall in a comfortable inn, where, being a temperate man, he wiled away the evening with making a bottle of sherry into negus. His rambles brought him at length into the interior of Merionethshire, the land of all that is beautiful in nature, and all that is lovely in woman.

Here, in a secluded village, he found a little inn, of small pretension and much comfort. He felt so satisfied with his quarters, and discovered every day so much variety in the scenes of the surrounding mountains, that his inclination to proceed farther diminished progressively.

It is one thing to follow the high road through a country, with every principally remarkable object carefully noted down in a book, taking, as therein directed, a guide at particular points, to the more recondite sights: it is another to sit down on one chosen spot, especially when the choice is unpremeditated, and from thence, by a series of explorations, to come day by day on unanticipated scenes. The latter process has many advantages over the former; it is free from the disappointment which attends excited expectation, when imagination has outstripped reality, and from the accidents that mar the scheme of the tourist's single day, when the valleys may be drenched with rain, or the mountains shrouded with mist.

The captain was one morning preparing to sally forth on his usual exploration, when he heard a voice without, inquiring for a guide to the ruined castle. The voice seemed familiar to him, and going forth into the gateway, he recognized Mr. Chainmail. After greetings and inquiries for the absent, "You vanished very abruptly, captain," said Mr. Chainmail, "from our party on the canal."

Captain Fitzchrome.—To tell you the truth, I had a particular reason for trying the effect of absence from a part of that party.

Mr. Chainmail.—I surmised as much: at the same time, the unusual melancholy of an in general most vivacious young lady made me wonder at your having acted so precipitately. The lady's heart is yours, if there be truth in signs.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Hearts are not now what they were in the days of the old song, "Will love be controlled by advice?"

Mr. Chainmail.—Very true, hearts, heads, and arms have all degenerated, most sadly. We can no more feel the high impassioned love of the ages, which some people have the impudence to call dark, than we can wield King Richard's battleaxe, bend Robin's Hood's bow, or flourish the oaken graff of the Pinder of Wakefield. Still we have our tastes and feelings, though they deserve not the name of passions;

and some of us may pluck up spirit to try to carry a point, when we reflect that we have to contend with men no better than ourselves.

Captain Fitzchrome.—We do not now break lances for ladies.

Mr. Chainmail.—No, nor even bulrushes. We jingle purses for them, flourish paper-money banners, and tilt with scrolls of parchment.

Captain Fitzchrome.—In which sort of tilting I have been thrown from the saddle. I presume it was not love that led you from the flotilla.

Mr. Chainmail.—By no means. I was tempted by the sight of an old tower, not to leave this land of ruined castles, without having collected a few hints for the adornment of my baronial hall.

Captain Fitzchrome.—I understand you live *en famille* with your domestics. You will have more difficulty in finding a lady who would adopt your fashion of living, than one who would prefer you to a richer man.

Mr. Chainmail.—Very true. I have tried the experiment on several as guests; but once was enough for them: so, I suppose, I shall die a bachelor.

Captain Fitzchrome.—I see, like some others of my friends, you will give up anything except your hobby.

Mr. Chainmail.—I will give up anything but my baronial hall.

Captain Fitzchrome.—You will never find a wife for your purpose, unless in the daughter of some old-fashioned farmer.

Mr. Chainmail.—No, I thank you. I must have a lady of gentle blood; I shall not marry below my own condition: I am too much of a herald; I have too much of the twelfth century in me for that.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Why then your chance is not much better than mine. A well-born beauty would scarcely be better pleased with your baronial hall, than with my more humble offer of love in a cottage. She must have a town-house, and an opera-box, and roll about the streets in a carriage; especially if her father has a rotten borough, for the sake of which he sells his daughter, that he may continue to sell his country. But you were inquiring for a guide to the ruined castle in this vicinity; I know the way, and will conduct you.

The proposal pleased Mr. Chainmail, and they set forth on their expedition.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LAKE. — THE RUIN.

Or vieni, Amore, e quà meco t'assetta.—ORLANDO INNAMORATO.

MR. CHAINMAIL.—Would it not be a fine thing, captain,—you being picturesque, and I poetical; you being for the lights and shadows of the present, and I for those of the past,—if we were to go together over the ground which was travelled in the twelfth century by Giraldus de Barri, when he accompanied Archbishop Baldwin to preach the crusade?

Captain Fitzchrome.—Nothing, in my present frame of mind, could be more agreeable to me.

Mr. Chainmail.—We would provide ourselves with his *Itinerarium;* compare what has been with what is; contemplate in their decay the castles and abbeys which he saw in their strength and splendour; and, while you were sketching their remains, I would dispassionately inquire what has been gained by the change.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Be it so.

But the scheme was no sooner arranged than the captain was summoned to London by a letter on business, which he did not expect to detain him long. Mr. Chainmail, who, like the captain, was fascinated with the inn and the scenery, determined to await his companion's return; and, having furnished him with a list of books, which he was to bring with him from London, took leave of him, and began to pass his days like the heroes of Ariosto, who

> ——tutto il giorno, al bel oprar intenti,
> Saliron balze, e traversar torrenti.

One day Mr. Chainmail traced upwards the course of a mountain-stream, to a spot where a small waterfall threw itself over a slab of perpendicular rock, which seemed to bar his farther progress. On a nearer view, he discovered a flight of steps, roughly hewn in the rock, on one side of the fall.

[redacted]

Ascending these steps, he entered a narrow winding pass, between high and naked rocks, that afforded only space for a rough footpath carved on one side, at some height above the torrent.

The pass opened on a lake, from which the stream issued, and which lay like a dark mirror, set in a gigantic frame of mountain precipices. Fragments of rock lay scattered on the edge of the lake, some half-buried in the water. Mr. Chainmail scrambled some way over these fragments, till the base of a rock, sinking abruptly in the water, effectually barred his progress. He sat down on a large smooth stone; the faint murmur of the stream he had quitted, the occasional flapping of the wings of the heron, and at long intervals the solitary springing of a trout were the only sounds that came to his ear. The sun shone brightly half-way down the opposite rocks, presenting on their irregular faces, strong masses of light and shade. She [illegible] heard the dash of a paddle, and [illegible] a solitary and beautiful girl gliding over the lake in a coracle; she was proceeding from the vicinity of the point he had quitted, towards the upper end of the lake. Her apparel was rustic, but there was in its style something more *recherché*, in its arrangement something more of elegance and precision, than was common to the mountain peasant girl. It had more of the *contadina* of the opera than of the genuine mountaineer: so at least thought Mr. Chainmail: but she passed so rapidly, and took him so much by surprise, that he had little opportunity for accurate observation. He saw her land, at the farther extremity, and disappear among the rocks: he rose from his seat, returned to the mouth of the pass, stepped from stone to stone across the stream, and attempted to pass round by the other side of the lake; but there again the abruptly sinking precipice closed his way.

Day after day he haunted the spot, but never saw again either the damsel or the coracle. At length, marvelling at himself for being so solicitous about the apparition of a peasant girl in a coracle, who could not, by any possibility, be anything to him, he resumed his explorations in another direction.

One day he wandered to the ruined castle, on the sea-shore, which was not very distant from his inn: and sitting on the rock, near the base of the ruin, was calling up the forms of

past ages on the wall of an ivied tower, when on its summit appeared a female figure, whom he recognized in an instant for his nymph of the coracle. The folds of the blue gown pressed by the sea breeze against one of the most symmetrical of figures, the black feather of the black hat, and the ringleted hair beneath it fluttering in the wind; the apparent peril of her position, on the edge of the mouldering wall, from whose immediate base the rock went down perpendicularly to the sea, presented a singularly interesting combination to the eye of the young antiquary.

Mr. Chainmail had to pass half round the castle, on the land side, before he could reach the entrance: he coasted the dry and bramble-grown moat, crossed the unguarded bridge, passed the unportcullise arch of the gateway, entered the castle court, ascertained the tower, ascended the broken stairs, and stood on the ivied wall. But the nymph of the place was gone. He searched the ruins within and without, but he found not what he sought: he haunted the castle day after day, as he had done the lake, but the damsel appeared no more.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DINGLE.

The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her, and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place,
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty, born of murmuring sound,
Shall pass into her face.—WORDSWORTH.

MISS SUSANNAH TOUCHANDGO had read the four great poets of Italy, and many of the best writers of France. About the time of her father's downfall, accident threw into her way *Les Rêveries du Promeneur Solitaire;* and from the impression which these made on her, she carried with her into retirement all the works of Rousseau. In the midst of that startling light which the conduct of old friends on a sudden reverse of fortune throws on a young and inexperienced mind, the doctrines of the philosopher of Geneva struck with double force upon her sympathies: she

imbibed the sweet poison, as somebody calls it, of his writings, even to a love of truth; which, every wise man knows, ought to be left to those who can get anything by it. The society of children, the beauties of nature, the solitude of the mountains, became her consolation, and, by degrees, her delight. The gay society from which she had been excluded remained on her memory only as a disagreeable dream. She imbibed her new monitor's ideas of simplicity of dress, assimilating her own with that of the peasant girls in the neighbourhood; the black hat, the blue gown, the black stockings, the shoes tied on the instep.

Pride was, perhaps, at the bottom of the change; she was willing to impose in some measure on herself, by marking a contemptuous indifference to the characteristics of the class of society from which she had fallen,

> "And with the food of pride sustained her soul
> In solitude."

It is true that she somewhat modified the forms of her rustic dress; to the black hat she added a black feather, to the blue gown she added a tippet, and a waistband fastened in front with a silver buckle; she wore her black stockings very smooth and tight on her ancles, and tied her shoes in tasteful bows, with the nicest possible ribbon. In this apparel, to which, in winter, she added a scarlet cloak, she made dreadful havoc among the rustic mountaineers, many of whom proposed to "keep company" with her in the Cambrian fashion, an honour which, to their great surprise, she always declined. Among these, Harry Ap-Heather, whose father rented an extensive sheepwalk, and had a thousand she-lambs wandering in the mountains, was the most strenuous in his suit, and the most pathetic in his lamentations for her cruelty.

Miss Susannah often wandered among the mountains alone, even to some distance from the farm-house. Sometimes she descended into the bottom of the dingles, to the black rocky beds of the torrents, and dreamed away hours at the feet of the cataracts. One spot in particular, from which she had at first shrunk with terror, became by degrees her favourite haunt. A path turning and returning at acute angles, led down a steep wood-covered slope to the edge of a chasm, where a pool, or resting-place of a torrent, lay far below. A cataract fell in a single sheet into the pool; the pool boiled

and bubbled at the base of the fall, but through the greater part of its extent lay calm, deep, and black, as if the cataract had plunged through it to an unimaginable depth without disturbing its eternal repose. At the opposite extremity of the pool, the rocks almost met at their summits, the trees of the opposite banks intermingled their leaves, and another cataract plunged from the pool into a chasm on which the sunbeams never gleamed. High above, on both sides, the steep woody slopes of the dingle soared into the sky; and from a fissure in the rock, on which the little path terminated, a single gnarled and twisted oak stretched itself over the pool, forming a fork with its boughs at a short distance from the rock. Miss Susannah often sat on the rock, with her feet resting on this tree: in time, she made her seat on the tree itself, with her feet hanging over the abyss; and at length she accustomed herself to lie along upon its trunk, with her side on the mossy boll of the fork, and an arm round one of the branches. From this position a portion of the sky and the woods was reflected in the pool, which, from its bank, was but a mass of darkness. The first time she reclined in this manner, her heart beat audibly; in time, she lay down as calmly as on the mountain heather: the perception of the sublime was probably heightened by an intermingled sense of danger; and perhaps that indifference to life, which early disappointment forces upon sensitive minds, was necessary to the first experiment. There was, in the novelty and strangeness of the position, an excitement which never wholly passed away, but which became gradually subordinate to the influence, at once tranquillizing and elevating, of the mingled eternity of motion, sound, and solitude.

One sultry noon, she descended into this retreat with a mind more than usually disturbed by reflections on the past. She lay in her favourite position, sometimes gazing on the cataract; looking sometimes up the steep sylvan acclivities into the narrow space of the cloudless ether; sometimes down into the abyss of the pool, and the deep bright-blue reflections that opened another immensity below her. The distressing recollections of the morning, the world, and all its littlenesses, faded from her thoughts like a dream; but her wounded and wearied spirit drank in too deeply the tranquillizing power of the place, and she dropped asleep upon the tree like a ship-boy on the mast.

At this moment Mr. Chainmail emerged into daylight, on a projection of the opposite rock, having struck down through the woods in search of unsophisticated scenery. The scene he discovered filled him with delight: he seated himself on the rock, and fell into one of his romantic reveries; when suddenly the semblance of a black hat and feather caught his eye among the foliage of the projecting oak. He started up, shifted his position, and got a glimpse of a blue gown. It was his lady of the lake, his enchantress of the ruined castle, divided from him by a barrier, which, at a few yards below, he could almost overleap, yet unapproachable but by a circuit perhaps of many hours. He watched with intense anxiety. To listen if she breathed was out of the question: the noses of a dean and chapter would have been soundless in the roar of the torrent. From her extreme stillness, she appeared to sleep: yet what creature, not desperate, would go wilfully to sleep in such a place? Was she asleep then? Nay, was she alive? She was as motionless as death. Had she been murdered, thrown from above, and caught in the tree? She lay too regularly and too composedly for such a supposition. She was asleep then, and in all probability her waking would be fatal. He shifted his position. Below the pool two beetle-browed rocks nearly overarched the chasm, leaving just such a space at the summit as was within the possibility of a leap; the torrent roared below in a fearful gulf. He paused some time on the brink, measuring the practicability and the danger, and casting every now and then an anxious glance to his sleeping beauty. In one of these glances he saw a slight movement of the blue gown, and, in a moment after, the black hat and feather dropped into the pool. Reflection was lost for a moment, and, by a sudden impulse, he bounded over the chasm.

He stood above the projecting oak; the unknown beauty lay like the nymph of the scene; her long black hair, which the fall of her hat had disengaged from its fastenings, drooping through the boughs: he saw that the first thing to be done was to prevent her throwing her feet off the trunk, in the first movements of waking. He sat down on the rock, and placed his feet on the stem, securing her ankles between his own; one of her arms was round a branch of the fork, the other lay loosely on her side. The hand of this arm he endeavoured to reach, by leaning forward from his seat; he

approximated, but could not touch it: after several tantalizing efforts, he gave up the point in despair. He did not attempt to wake her, because he feared it might have bad consequences, and he resigned himself to expect the moment of her natural waking, determined not to stir from his post, if she should sleep till midnight.

In this period of forced inaction, he could contemplate at leisure the features and form of his charmer. She was not one of the slender beauties of romance; she was as plump as a partridge; her cheeks were two roses, not absolutely damask, yet verging thereupon; her lips twin-cherries of equal size; her nose regular, and almost Grecian; her forehead high, and delicately fair; her eyebrows symmetrically arched; her eyelashes long, black, and silky, fitly corresponding with the beautiful tresses that hung among the leaves of the oak, like clusters of wandering grapes.* Her eyes were yet to be seen; but how could he doubt that their opening would be the rising of the sun, when all that surrounded their fringy portals was radiant as "the forehead of the morning sky?"

CHAPTER XV.

THE FARM.

Da ydyw'r gwaith, rhaid d'we'yd y gwir,
Ar fryniau Sîr Meirionydd;
Golwg oer o'r gwaela gawn
Mae hi etto yn llawn llawenydd.

Though Meirion's rocks, and hills of heath
Repel the distant sight;
Yet where, than those bleak hills beneath,
Is found more true delight?

AT length the young lady awoke. She was startled at the sudden sight of the stranger, and somewhat terrified at the first perception of her position. But she soon recovered her self-possession, and, extending her hand to the offered hand of Mr. Chainmail, she raised herself up on the tree, and stepped on the rocky bank.

Mr. Chainmail solicited permission to attend her to her

* Ἀλήμονα βότρυν ἔθειρας.—NONNUS.

home, which the young lady graciously conceded. They emerged from the woody dingle, traversed an open heath, wound along a mountain road by the shore of a lake, descended to the deep bed of another stream, crossed it by a series of stepping stones, ascended to some height on the opposite side, and followed upwards the line of the stream, till the banks opened into a spacious amphitheatre, where stood, in its fields and meadows, the farm-house of Ap-Llymry.

During this walk, they had kept up a pretty animated conversation. The lady had lost her hat; and, as she turned towards Mr. Chainmail, in speaking to him, there was no envious projection of brim to intercept the beams of those radiant eyes he had been so anxious to see unclosed. There was in them a mixture of softness and brilliancy, the perfection of the beauty of female eyes, such as some men have passed through life without seeing, and such as no man ever saw, in any pair of eyes, but once; such as can never be seen and forgotten. Young Crotchet had seen it; he had not forgotten it; but he had trampled on its memory, as the renegade tramples on the emblems of a faith which his interest only, and not his heart or his reason, has rejected.

Her hair streamed over her shoulders; the loss of the black feather had left nothing but the rustic costume, the blue gown, the black stockings, and the ribbon-tied shoes. Her voice had that full soft volume of melody which gives to common speech the fascination of music. Mr. Chainmail could not reconcile the dress of the damsel with her conversation and manners. He threw out a remote question or two, with the hope of solving the riddle; but, receiving no reply, he became satisfied that she was not disposed to be communicative respecting herself, and, fearing to offend her, fell upon other topics. They talked of the scenes of the mountains, of the dingle, the ruined castle, the solitary lake. She told him that lake lay under the mountains behind her home, and the coracle and the pass at the extremity saved a long circuit to the nearest village, whither she sometimes went to inquire for letters.

Mr. Chainmail felt curious to know from whom these letters might be; and he again threw out two or three fishing questions, to which, as before, he obtained no answer.

The only living biped they met in their walk was

unfortunate Harry Ap-Heather, with whom they fell in by the stepping-stones, who, seeing the girl of his heart hanging on another man's arm, and, concluding at once that they were "keeping company," fixed on her a mingled look of surprise, reproach, and tribulation; and, unable to control his feelings under the sudden shock, burst into a flood of tears, and blubbered till the rocks re-echoed.

They left him mingling his tears with the stream, and his lamentations with its murmurs. Mr. Chainmail inquired who that strange creature might be, and what was the matter with him. The young lady answered, that he was a very worthy young man, to whom she had been the innocent cause of much unhappiness.

"I pity him sincerely," said Mr. Chainmail; and nevertheless, he could scarcely restrain his laughter at the exceedingly original figure which the unfortunate rustic lover had presented by the stepping-stones.

The children ran out to meet their dear Miss Susan, jumped all round her, and asked what was become of her hat. Ap-Llymry came out in great haste, and invited Mr. Chainmail to walk in and dine: Mr. Chainmail did not wait to be asked twice. In a few minutes the whole party, Miss Susan and Mr. Chainmail, Mr. and Mrs. Ap-Llymry, and progeny, were seated over a clean homespun tablecloth, ornamented with fowls and bacon, a pyramid of potatoes, another of cabbage, which Ap-Llymry said "was poiled with the pacon, and as coot as marrow," a bowl of milk for the children, and an immense brown jug of foaming ale, with which Ap-Llymry seemed to delight in filling the horn of his new guest.

Shall we describe the spacious apartment, which was at once kitchen, hall, and dining-room,—the large dark rafters, the pendent bacon and onions, the strong old oaken furniture, the bright and trimly-arranged utensils? Shall we describe the cut of Ap-Llymry's coat, the colour and tie of his neck-cloth, the number of buttons at his knees—the structure of Mrs. Ap Llymry's cap, having lappets over the ears, which were united under the chin, setting forth especially whether the bond of union were a pin or a ribbon? We shall leave this tempting field of interesting expatiation to those whose brains are high-pressure steam-engines for spinning prose by the

furlong, to be trumpeted in paid-for paragraphs in the quack's corner of newspapers: modern literature having attained the honourable distinction of sharing with blacking and macassar oil, the space which used to be monopolized by razor-strops and the lottery, whereby that very enlightened community, the reading public, is tricked into the perusal of much exemplary nonsense; though the few who see through the trickery have no reason to complain, since as "good wine needs no bush," so, *ex vi oppositi*, these bushels of venal panegyric point out very clearly that the things they celebrate are not worth reading.

The party dined very comfortably in a corner most remote from the fire; and Mr. Chainmail very soon found his head swimming with two or three horns of ale, of a potency to which even he was unaccustomed. After dinner, Ap-Llymry made him finish a bottle of mead, which he willingly accepted, both as an excuse to remain, and as a drink of the dark ages, which he had no doubt was a genuine brewage, from uncorrupted tradition.

In the meantime, as soon as the cloth was removed, the children had brought out Miss Susannah's harp. She began, without affectation, to play and sing to the children, as was her custom of an afternoon, first in their own language, and their national melodies, then in English; but she was soon interrupted by a general call of little voices for "Ouf! di giorno." She complied with the request, and sung the ballad from Paër's Camilla: *Un dì carco il mulinaro.** The children were very familiar with every syllable of this ballad, which had been often fully explained to them. They danced in a circle with the burden of every verse, shouting out the chorus with good articulation and joyous energy; and at the end of the second stanza, where the traveller has his

* In this ballad, the terrors of the Black Forest are narrated to an assemblage of domestics and peasants, who, at the end of every stanza dance in a circle round the narrator. The second stanza is as follows:

Una notte in un stradotto
Un incauto s'inoltrò;
E uno strillo udì di botto
Che l'orecchio gl'intronò:—
Era l'ombra di sua nonna,
Che pel naso lo pigliò.
Ouf! di giorno nè di sera,
Non passiam la selva nera.—(*Ballano in Giro*).

nose pinched by his grandmother's ghost, every nose in the party was nipped by a pair of little fingers. Mr. Chainmail, who was not prepared for the process, came in for a very energetic tweak, from a chubby girl that sprung suddenly on his knees for the purpose, and made the roof ring with her laughter.

So passed the time till evening, when Mr. Chainmail moved to depart. But it turned out on inquiry that he was some miles from his inn, that the way was intricate, and that he must not make any difficulty about accepting the farmer's hospitality till morning. The evening set in with rain: the fire was found agreeable; they drew around it. The young lady made tea; and afterwards, from time to time, at Mr. Chainmail's special request, delighted his ear with passages of ancient music. Then came a supper of lake trout, fried on the spot, and thrown, smoking hot, from the pan to the plate. Then came a brewage, which the farmer called his nightcap, of which he insisted on Mr. Chainmail's taking his full share. After which the gentleman remembered nothing, till he awoke, the next morning, to the pleasant consciousness that he was under the same roof with one of the most fascinating creatures under the canopy of heaven.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE NEWSPAPER.

Ποίας δ' ἀποσπασθεῖσα φύτλας
'Ορέων κευθμῶνας ἔχει σκιοέντων;

Snatched from what clan has been the maid
To dwell in these cleft mountains' shade?—PIND., *Pyth.* IX.

MR. CHAINMAIL forgot the captain and the route of Giraldus de Barri. He became suddenly satisfied that the ruined castle in his present neighbourhood was the best possible specimen of its class, and that it was needless to carry his researches further.

He visited the farm daily; found himself always welcome; flattered himself that the young lady saw him with pleasure, and dragged a heavier chain at every new parting from Miss Susan, as the children called his nymph of the mountains.

What might be her second name, he had vainly endeavoured to discover.

Mr. Chainmail was in love; but the determination he had long before formed and fixed in his mind, to marry only a lady of gentle blood, without a blot on her escutcheon, repressed the declarations of passion which were often rising to his lips. In the meantime, he left no means untried to pluck out the heart of her mystery.

The young lady soon divined his passion, and penetrated his prejudices. She began to look on him with favourable eyes; but she feared her name and parentage would present an insuperable barrier to his feudal pride.

Things were in this state when the captain returned, and unpacked his maps and books in the parlour of the inn.

Mr. Chainmail.—Really, captain, I find so many objects of attraction in this neighbourhood, that I would gladly postpone our purpose.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Undoubtedly, this neighbourhood has many attractions; but there is something very inviting in the scheme you laid down.

Mr. Chainmail.—No doubt, there is something very tempting in the route of Giraldus de Barri. But there are better things in this vicinity even than that. To tell you the truth, captain, I have fallen in love.

Captain Fitzchrome.—What! while I have been away?

Mr. Chainmail.—Even so.

Captain Fitzchrome.—The plunge must have been very sudden, if you are already over head and ears.

Mr. Chainmail.—As deep as Llyn-y-dreiddiad-vrawd.

Captain Fitzchrome.—And what may that be?

Mr. Chainmail.—A pool not far off: a resting-place of a mountain-stream, which is said to have no bottom. There is a tradition connected with it; and here is a ballad on it, at your service:—

LLYN-Y-DREIDDIAD-VRAWD.

THE POOL OF THE DIVING FRIAR.

GWENWYNWYN withdrew from the feasts of his hall;
He slept very little, he prayed not at all;
He pondered, and wandered, and studied alone;
And sought, night and day, the philosopher's stone.

He found it at length, and he made its first proof
By turning to gold all the lead of his roof:
Then he bought some magnanimous heroes, all fire,
Who lived but to smite and be smitten for hire.

With these, on the plains like a torrent he broke;
He filled the whole country with flame and with smoke;
He killed all the swine, and he broached all the wine;
He drove off the sheep, and the beeves, and the kine;

He took castles and towns; he cut short limbs and lives;
He made orphans and widows of children and wives:
This course many years he triumphantly ran,
And did mischief enough to be called a great man.

When, at last, he had gained all for which he had striven,
He bethought him of buying a passport to heaven;
Good and great as he was, yet he did not well know
How soon, or which way, his great spirit might go.

He sought the gray friars, who, beside a wild stream,
Refected their frames on a primitive scheme;
The gravest and wisest Gwenwynwyn found out,
All lonely and ghostly, and angling for trout.

Below the white dash of a mighty cascade,
Where a pool of the stream a deep resting-place made,
And rock-rooted oaks stretched their branches on high,
The friar stood musing, and throwing his fly.

To him said Gwenwynwyn, "Hold, father, here's store,
For the good of the Church, and the good of the poor;"
Then he gave him the stone; but, ere more he could speak,
Wrath came on the friar, so holy and meek:

He had stretched forth his hand to receive the red gold,
And he thought himself mocked by Gwenwynwyn the Bold;
And in scorn at the gift, and in rage at the giver,
He jerked it immediately into the river.

Gwenwynwyn, aghast, not a syllable spake;
The philosopher's stone made a duck and a drake:
Two systems of circles a moment were seen,
And the stream smoothed them off, as they never had been.

Gwenwynwyn regained, and uplifted his voice:
"Oh friar, gray friar, full rash was thy choice;
The stone, the good stone, which away thou hast thrown,
Was the stone of all stones, the philosopher's stone!"

The friar looked pale, when his error he knew;
The friar looked red, and the friar looked blue;
And heels over head, from the point of a rock,
He plunged, without stopping to pull off his frock.

He dived very deep, but he dived all in vain,
The prize he had slighted he found not again:
Many times did the friar his diving renew,
And deeper and deeper the river still grew.

Gwenwynwyn gazed long, if his senses in doubt,
To see the gray friar a diver so stout.
Then slowly and sadly his castle he sought,
And left the friar diving, like cadelnick distraught.

Gwenwynwyn fell sick with alarm and despite,
Died, and went to the devil, the very same night:
The magnanimous heroes he held in his pay
Sacked his castle, and marched with the plunder away.

No knell on the silence of midnight was rolled,
For the flight of the soul of Gwenwynwyn the Bold:
The brethren, unfeed, let the mighty ghost pass,
Without praying a prayer, or intoning a mass.

The friar haunted ever beside the dark stream;
The philosopher's stone was his thought and his dream;
And day after day, ever head under heels,
He dived, all the time he could spare from his meals.

He dived, and he dived, to the end of his days,
As the peasants oft witnessed with fear and amaze:
The mad friar's diving-place long was their theme,
And no plummet can fathom that pool of the stream.

And still, when light clouds on the midnight winds ride,
If by moonlight you stray on the lone river-side,
The ghost of the friar may be seen diving there,
With head in the water, and heels in the air.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Well, your ballad is very pleasant: you shall show me the scene, and I will sketch it; but just now I am more interested about your love. What heroine of the twelfth century has risen from the ruins of the old castle, and looked down on you from the ivied battlements?

Mr. Chainmail.—You are nearer the mark than you suppose. Even from those battlements a heroine of the twelfth century has looked down on me.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Oh! some vision of an ideal beauty. I suppose the whole will end in another tradition and a ballad.

Mr. Chainmail.—Genuine flesh and blood; as genuine as Lady Clarinda. I will tell you the story.

Mr. Chainmail narrated his adventures.

Captain Fitzchrome.—Then you seem to have found what you wished. Chance has thrown in your way what none of the gods would have ventured to promise you.

Mr. Chainmail.—Yes, but I know nothing of her birth and parentage. She tells me nothing of herself, and I have no right to question her directly.

Captain Fitzchrome.—She appears to be expressly destined for the light of your baronial hall. Introduce me: in this case two heads are better than one.

Mr. Chainmail.—No, I thank you. Leave me to manage my chance of a prize, and keep you to your own chance of a——

Captain Fitzcrome.—Blank? As you please. Well, I will pitch my tent here, till I have filled my portfolio, and shall be glad of as much of your company as you can spare from more attractive society.

Matters went on pretty smoothly for several days, when an unlucky newspaper threw all into confusion. Mr. Chainmail received newspapers by the post, which came in three times a week. One morning, over their half-finished breakfast, the captain had read half a newspaper very complacently, when suddenly he started up in a frenzy, hurled over the breakfast table, and, bouncing from the apartment, knocked down Harry Ap-Heather, who was coming in at the door to challenge his supposed rival to a boxing-match.

Harry sprang up in a double rage, and intercepted Mr. Chainmail's pursuit of the captain, placing himself in the doorway in a pugilistic attitude. Mr. Chainmail, not being disposed for this mode of combat, stepped back into the parlour, took the poker in his right hand, and, displacing the loose bottom of a large elbow-chair, threw it over his left arm, as a shield. Harry, not liking the aspect of the enemy in this imposing attitude, retreated with backward steps into the kitchen, and tumbled over a cur, which immediately fastened on his rear.

Mr. Chainmail, half-laughing, half-vexed, anxious to overtake the captain, and curious to know what was the matter with him, pocketed the newspaper, and sallied forth, leaving Harry roaring for a doctor and a tailor, to repair the lacerations of his outward man.

Mr. Chainmail could find no trace of the captain. Indeed, he sought him but in one direction, which was that leading to the farm; where he arrived in due time, and found Miss Susan alone. He laid the newspaper on the table, as was his custom, and proceeded to converse with the young lady: a conversation of many pauses, as much of signs as of words. The young lady took up the paper, and turned it over and over, while she listened to Mr. Chainmail, whom she found

every day more and more agreeable, when suddenly her eye glanced on something which made her change colour, and, dropping the paper on the ground, she rose from her seat, exclaiming, "Miserable must she be who trusts any of your faithless sex! Never, never, never, will I endure such misery twice!" And she vanished up the stairs. Mr. Chainmail was petrified. At length, he cried aloud, "Cornelius Agrippa must have laid a spell on this accursed newspaper;" and was turning it over to look for the source of the mischief, when Mrs. Ap-Llymry made her appearance.

Mrs. Ap-Llymry.—What have you done to poor dear Miss Susan? She is crying ready to break her heart.

Mr. Chainmail.—So help me the memory of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, I have not the most distant notion of what is the matter!

Mrs. Ap-Llymry.—Oh, don't tell me, sir; you must have ill-used her. I know how it is. You have been keeping company with her, as if you wanted to marry her; and now, all at once, you have been trying to make her your mistress. I have seen such tricks more than once, and you ought to be ashamed of yourself.

Mr. Chainmail.—My dear madam, you wrong me utterly. I have none but the kindest feelings and the most honourable purposes towards her. She has been disturbed by something she has seen in this rascally paper.

Mrs. Ap-Llymry.—Why, then, the best thing you can do is to go away, and come again to-morrow.

Mr. Chainmail.—Not I, indeed, madam. Out of this house I stir not till I have seen the young lady, and obtained a full explanation.

Mrs. Ap-Llymry.—I will tell Miss Susan what you say. Perhaps she will come down.

Mr. Chainmail sate, with as much patience as he could command, running over the paper, from column to column. At length he lighted on an announcement of the approaching marriage of Lady Clarinda Bossnowl with Mr. Crotchet the younger. This explained the captain's discomposure, but the cause of Miss Susan's was still to be sought; he could not know that it was one and the same.

Presently the sound of the longed-for step was heard on the stairs; the young lady reappeared and resumed her seat: her eyes showed that she had been weeping. The gentleman

was now exceedingly puzzled how to begin, but the young lady relieved him by asking, with great simplicity, "What do you wish to have explained, sir?"

Mr. Chainmail.—I wish, if I may be permitted, to explain myself to you. Yet could I first wish to know what it was that disturbed you in this unlucky paper. Happy should I be if I could remove the cause of your inquietude!

Miss Susannah.—The cause is already removed. I saw something that excited painful recollections; nothing that I could now wish otherwise than as it is.

Mr. Chainmail.—Yet, may I ask why it is that I find one so accomplished living in this obscurity, and passing only by the name of Miss Susan?

Miss Susannah.—The world and my name are not friends. I have left the world, and wish to remain for ever a stranger to all whom I once knew in it.

Mr. Chainmail.—You can have done nothing to dishonour your name.

Miss Susannah.—No, sir. My father has done that of which the world disapproves, in matters of which I pretend not to judge. I have suffered for it as I will never suffer again. My name is my own secret; I have no other, and that is one not worth knowing. You see what I am, and all I am. I live according to the condition of my present fortune; and here, so living, I have found tranquillity.

Mr. Chainmail.—Yet, I entreat you, tell me your name.

Miss Susannah.—Why, sir?

Mr. Chainmail.—Why, but to throw my hand, my heart, my fortune, at your feet, if——

Miss Susannah.—If my name be worthy of them.

Mr. Chainmail.—Nay, nay, not so; if your hand and heart are free.

Miss Susannah.—My hand and heart are free; but they must be sought from myself, and not from my name.

She fixed her eyes on him, with a mingled expression of mistrust, of kindness, and of fixed resolution, which the far-gone *innamorato* found irresistible.

Mr. Chainmail.—Then from yourself alone I seek them.

Miss Susannah.—Reflect. You have prejudices on the score of parentage. I have not conversed with you so often, without knowing what they are. Choose between them and me. I too have my own prejudices on the score of personal pride.

Mr. Chainmail.—I would choose you from all the world, were you even the daughter of the *executeur des hautes œuvres*, as the heroine of a romantic story I once read turned out to be.

Miss Susannah.—I am satisfied. You have now a right to know my history; and, if you repent, I absolve you from all obligations.

She told him her history; but he was out of the reach of repentance. "It is true," as at a subsequent period he said to the captain, "she is the daughter of a money-changer; one who, in the days of Richard the First, would have been plucked by the beard in the streets; but she is, according to modern notions, a lady of gentle blood. As to her father's running away, that is a minor consideration: I have always understood, from Mr. Mac Quedy, who is a great oracle in this way, that promises to pay ought not to be kept; the essence of a safe and economical currency being an interminable series of broken promises. There seems to be a difference among the learned as to the way in which the promises ought to be broken; but I am not deep enough in their casuistry to enter into such nice distinctions."

In a few days there was a wedding, a pathetic leave-taking of the farmer's family, a hundred kisses from the bride to the children, and promises twenty times reclaimed and renewed, to visit them in the ensuing year.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE INVITATION.

A cup of wine, that's brisk and fine,
And drink unto the leman mine.—*Master Silence.*

THIS veridicous history began in May, and the occurrences already narrated have carried it on to the middle of autumn. Stepping over the interval to Christmas, we find ourselves in our first locality, among the chalk hills of the Thames; and we discover our old friend, Mr. Crotchet, in the act of accepting an invitation, for himself, and any friends who might be with him, to pass their Christmas-day at Chainmail Hall, after the fashion of the twelfth century.

Mr. Crotchet had assembled about him, for his own Christmas-festivities, nearly the same party which was introduced to the reader in the spring. Three of that party were wanting. Dr. Morbific, by inoculating himself once too often with non-contagious matter, had explained himself out of the world. Mr. Henbane had also departed, on the wings of an infallible antidote. Mr. Eavesdrop, having printed in a magazine some of the after-dinner conversations of the castle, had had sentence of exclusion passed upon him, on the motion of the Reverend Doctor Folliott, as a flagitious violator of the confidences of private life.

Miss Crotchet had become Lady Bossnowl, but Lady Clarinda had not yet changed her name to Crotchet. She had, on one pretence and another, procrastinated the happy event, and the gentleman had not been very pressing; she had, however, accompanied her brother and sister-in-law, to pass Christmas at Crotchet Castle. With these, Mr. Mac Quedy, Mr. Philpot, Mr. Trillo, Mr. Skionar, Mr. Toogood, and Mr. Firedamp, were sitting at breakfast, when the Reverend Doctor Folliott entered and took his seat at the table.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Well, Mr. Mac Quedy, it is now some weeks since we have met: how goes on the march of mind?

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Nay, sir; I think you may see that with your own eyes.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Sir, I have seen it, much to my discomfiture. It has marched into my rick-yard, and set my stacks on fire, with chemical materials, most scientifically compounded. It has marched up to the door of my vicarage, a hundred and fifty strong; ordered me to surrender half my tithes; consumed all the provisions I had provided for my audit feast, and drunk up my old October. It has marched in through my back-parlour shutters, and out again with my silver spoons, in the dead of the night. The policeman, who was sent down to examine, says my house has been broken open on the most scientific principles. All this comes of education.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—I rather think it comes of poverty.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—No, sir. Robbery perhaps comes of poverty, but scientific principles of robbery come of education. I suppose the learned friend has written a sixpenny

treatise on mechanics, and the rascals who robbed me have been reading it.

Mr. Crotchet.—Your house would have been very safe, doctor, if they had had no better science than the learned friend's to work with.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Well, sir, that may be. Excellent potted char. The Lord deliver me from the learned friend.

Mr. Crotchet.—Well, doctor, for your comfort, here is a declaration of the learned friend's that he will never take office.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Then, sir, he will be in office next week. Peace be with him! Sugar and cream.

Mr. Crotchet.—But, doctor, are you for Chainmail Hall on Christmas-day?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—That am I, for there will be an excellent dinner, though, peradventure, grotesquely served.

Mr. Crotchet.—I have not seen my neighbour since he left us on the canal.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—He has married a wife, and brought her home.

Lady Clarinda.—Indeed! If she suits him, she must be an oddity: it will be amusing to see them together.

Lord Bossnowl.—Very amusing. He! he!

Mr. Firedamp.—Is there any water about Chainmail Hall?

Rev. Dr. Folliott.—An old moat.

Mr. Firedamp.—I shall die of *malaria*.

Mr. Trillo.—Shall we have any music?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—An old harper.

Mr. Trillo.—Those fellows are always horridly out of tune. What will he play?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Old songs and marches.

Mr. Skionar.—Amongst so many old things, I hope we shall find Old Philosophy.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—An old woman.

Mr. Philpot.—Perhaps an old map of the river in the twelfth century.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—No doubt.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—How many more old things?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Old hospitality, old wine, old ale—all the images of old England; an old butler.

Mr. Toogood.—Shall we all be welcome?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Heartily; you will be slapped on the shoulder, and called old boy.

Lord Bossnowl.—I think we should all go in our old clothes. He! he!

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—You will sit on old chairs, round an old table, by the light of old lamps, suspended from pointed arches, which, Mr. Chainmail says, first came into use in the twelfth century; with old armour on the pillars, and old banners in the roof.

Lady Clarinda.—And what curious piece of antiquity is the lady of the mansion?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—No antiquity there; none.

Lady Clarinda.—Who was she?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—That I know not.

Lady Clarinda.—Have you seen her?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—I have.

Lady Clarinda.—Is she pretty?

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—More—beautiful. A subject for the pen of Nonnus, or the pencil of Zeuxis. Features of all loveliness, radiant with all virtue and intelligence. A face for Antigone. A form at once plump and symmetrical, that, if it be decorous to divine it by externals, would have been a model for the Venus of Cnidos. Never was anything so goodly to look on, the present company excepted, and poor dear Mrs. Folliott. She reads moral philosophy, Mr. Mac Quedy, which indeed she might as well let alone; she reads Italian poetry, Mr. Skionar; she sings Italian music, Mr. Trillo; but, with all this, she has the greatest of female virtues, for she superintends the household, and looks after her husband's dinner. I believe she was a mountaineer: *παρθένος οὐρεσίφοιτος ἐρήμαδι σύντροφος ὕλῃ*,* as Nonnus sweetly sings.

* A mountain-wandering maid,
Twin-nourished with the solitary wood.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHAINMAIL HALL.

Vous autres dictes que ignorance est mere de tous maulx, et dictes vray: mais toutesfoys vous ne la bannissez mye de vos entendemens, et vivez en elle, avecques elle, et par elle. C'est pourquoy tant de maulx vous meshaignent de jour en jour.—RABELAIS, l. 5, c. 7.

THE party which was assembled on Christmas Day in Chainmail Hall comprised all the guests of Crotchet Castle, some of Mr. Chainmail's other neighbours, all his tenants, and domestics, and Captain Fitzchrome. The hall was spacious and lofty; and with its tall fluted pillars and pointed arches, its windows of stained glass, its display of arms and banners intermingled with holly and mistletoe, its blazing cressets and torches, and a stupendous fire in the centre, on which blocks of pine were flaming and crackling, had a striking effect on eyes unaccustomed to such a dining-room. The fire was open on all sides, and the smoke was caught and carried back, under a funnel-formed canopy, into a hollow central pillar. This fire was the line of demarcation between gentle and simple, on days of high festival. Tables extended from it on two sides, to nearly the end of the hall.

Mrs. Chainmail was introduced to the company. Young Crotchet felt some revulsion of feeling at the unexpected sight of one whom he had forsaken, but not forgotten, in a condition apparently so much happier than his own. The lady held out her hand to him with a cordial look of more than forgiveness; it seemed to say that she had much to thank him for. She was the picture of a happy bride, *rayonnante de joie et d'amour.*

Mr. Crotchet told the Reverend Doctor Folliott the news of the morning. "As you predicted," he said, "your friend, the learned friend, is in office; he has also a title; he is now Sir Guy de Vaux."

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Thank heaven for that. He is disarmed from further mischief. It is something, at any rate, to have that hollow and wind-shaken reed rooted up for ever from the field of public delusion.*

* I may here insert, as somewhat germane to the matter, some lines which were written by me, in March, 1831, and printed in the *Examiner* of August 14, 1831. They were then called "An Anticipation:" they may now (1837) be fairly entitled "A Prophecy fulfilled."

Mr. Crotchet.—I suppose, doctor, you do not like to see a great reformer in office; you are afraid for your vested interests.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Not I, indeed, sir; my vested interests are very safe from all such reformers as the learned friend. I vaticinate what will be the upshot of all his schemes of reform. He will make a speech of seven hours' duration, and this will be its quintessence: that, seeing the exceeding difficulty of putting salt on the bird's tail, it will be expedient to consider the best method of throwing dust in the bird's eyes. All the rest will be

Τιτιτιτιτιμπρύ.
Πoποποί, ποποποί.
Τιοτιοτιοτιοτιοτιοτίγξ.
Κικκακαῦ, κικηαξαῦ.
τορορορορορορολιλιλίγξ.*

as Aristophanes has it; and so I leave him, in Nephelo-coccygia.†

Mr. Mac Quedy came up to the divine as Mr. Crotchet left him, and said: "There is one piece of news which the

THE FATE OF A BROOM: AN ANTICIPATION.

Lo! in Corruption's lumber-room,
The remnants of a wondrous broom;
That walking, talking, oft was seen,
Making stout promise to sweep clean;
But evermore, at every push,
Proved but a stump without a brush.
Upon its handle-top, a sconce,
Like Brahma's, looked four ways at once,
Pouring on king, lords, church, and rabble,
Long floods of favour-currying gabble;
From four-fold mouth-piece always spinning
Projects of plausible beginning,
Whereof said sconce did ne'er intend
That any one should have an end;
Yet still, by shifts and quaint inventions,
Got credit for its good intentions,
Adding no trifle to the store,
Wherewith the devil paves his floor.
Worn out at last, found bare and scrubbish,
And thrown aside with other rubbish,
We'll e'en hand o'er the enchanted stick,
As a choice present for old Nick,
To sweep, beyond the Stygian lake,
The pavement it has helped to make.

* Sounds without meaning; imitative of the voices of birds. From the Ὀρνιθες of Aristophanes.

† "Cuckoo-city-in-the-clouds." From the same comedy.

old gentleman has not told you. The great firm of Catchflat and Company, in which young Crotchet is a partner, has stopped payment."

Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Bless me! that accounts for the young gentleman's melancholy. I thought they would over-reach themselves with their own tricks. The day of reckoning, Mr. Mac Quedy, is the point which your paper-money science always leaves out of view.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—I do not see, sir, that the failure of Catchflat and Company has anything to do with my science.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—It has this to do with it, sir, that you would turn the whole nation into a great paper-money shop, and take no thought of the day of reckoning. But the dinner is coming. I think you, who are so fond of paper-promises, should dine on the bill of fare.

The harper at the head of the hall struck up an ancient march, and the dishes were brought in, in grand procession.

The boar's head, garnished with rosemary, with a citron in its mouth, led the van. Then came tureens of plum-porridge; then a series of turkeys, and, in the midst of them, an enormous sausage, which required two men to carry. Then came geese and capons, tongues and hams, the ancient glory of the Christmas pie, a gigantic plum-pudding, a pyramid of minced pies, and a baron of beef bringing up the rear.

"It is something new under the sun," said the divine, as he sat down, "to see a great dinner without fish."

Mr. Chainmail.—Fish was for fasts, in the twelfth century.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Well, sir, I prefer our reformed system of putting fasts and feasts together. Not but there is ample indemnity.

Ale and wine flowed in abundance. The dinner passed off merrily; the old harper playing all the while the oldest music in his repertory. The tables being cleared, he indemnified himself for lost time at the lower end of the hall, in company with the old butler and the other domestics, whose attendance on the banquet had been indispensable.

The scheme of Christmas gambols, which Mr. Chainmail had laid for the evening, was interrupted by a tremendous clamour without.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—What have we here? Mummers?

Mr. Chainmail.—Nay, I know not. I expect none.

"Who is there?" he added, approaching the door of the hall.

"Who is there?" vociferated the divine, with the voice of Stentor.

"Captain Swing," replied a chorus of discordant voices.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Ho, ho! here is a piece of the dark ages we did not bargain for. Here is the Jacquerie. Here is the march of mind with a witness.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Do you not see that you have brought disparates together? the Jacquerie and the march of mind.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Not at all, sir. They are the same thing, under different names. Πολλῶν ὀνομάτων μορφημία.* What was Jacquerie in the dark ages, is the march of mind in this very enlightened one—very enlightened one.

Mr. Chainmail.—The cause is the same in both; poverty in despair.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Very likely; but the effect is extremely disagreeable.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—It is the natural result, Mr. Mac Quedy, of that system of state seamanship which your science upholds. Putting the crew on short allowance, and doubling the rations of the officers, is the sure way to make a mutiny on board a ship in distress, Mr. Mac Quedy.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Eh! sir, I uphold no such system as that. I shall set you right as to cause and effect. Discontent increases with the increase of information.† That is all.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—I said it was the march of mind. But we have not time for discussing cause and effect now. Let us get rid of the enemy.

And he vociferated at the top of his voice, "What do you want here?"

"Arms, arms," replied a hundred voices, "Give us the arms."

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—You see, Mr. Chainmail, this is the inconvenience of keeping an armoury, not fortified with sand bags, green bags, and old bags of all kinds.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Just give them the old spits and toasting irons, and they will go away quietly.

Mr. Chainmail.—My spears and swords! not without my life. These assailants are all aliens to my land and house.

* "One shape of many names."—ÆSCHYLUS, *Prometheus.*

† This looks so like caricature (a thing abhorrent to our candour), that we must give authority for it. "We ought to look the evil manfully in the face, and not amuse ourselves with the dreams of fancy. The discontent of the labourers in our times is rather a *proof* of their superior information than of their deterioration."—*Morning Chronicle: December 20, 1830.*

My men will fight for me, one and all. This is the fortress of beef and ale.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Eh! sir, when the rabble is up, it is very indiscriminating. You are e'en suffering for the sins of Sir Simon Steeltrap, and the like, who have pushed the principle of accumulation a little too far.

Mr. Chainmail.—The way to keep the people down is kind and liberal usage.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—That is very well (where it can be afforded), in the way of prevention; but in the way of cure, the operation must be more drastic. (*Taking down a battle-axe.*) I would fain have a good blunderbuss charged with slugs.

Mr. Chainmail.—When I suspended these arms for ornament, I never dreamed of their being called into use.

Mr. Skionar.—Let me address them. I never failed to convince an audience that the best thing they could do was go away.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Eh! sir, I can bring them to that conclusion in less time than you.

Mr. Crotchet.—I have no fancy for fighting. It is a very hard case upon a guest, when the latter end of a feast is the beginning of a fray.

Mr. Mac Quedy.—Give them the old iron.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Give them weapons! *Pessimo, medius fidius, exemplo.** Forbid it the spirit of *Frère Jean des Entommeures!* No! let us see what the church militant, in the armour of the twelfth century, will do against the march of mind. Follow me who will, and stay who list. Here goes: *Pro aris et focis!* that is, for tithe pigs and fires to roast them!

He clapped a helmet on his head, seized a long lance, threw open the gates, and tilted out on the rabble, side by side with Mr. Chainmail, followed by the greater portion of the male inmates of the hall, who had armed themselves at random.

The rabble route, being unprepared for such a sortie, fled in all directions, over hedge and ditch.

Mr. Trillo stayed in the hall, playing a march on the harp, to inspirit the rest to sally out. The water-loving Mr. Philpot had diluted himself with so much wine, as to be quite *hors de combat.* Mr. Toogood, intending to equip himself in purely defensive armour, contrived to slip a ponderous coat

* A most pernicious example, by Hercules!—PETRONIUS ARBITER.

of mail over his shoulders, which pinioned his arms to his sides; and in this condition, like a chicken trussed for roasting, he was thrown down behind a pillar, in the first rush of the sortie. Mr. Crotchet seized the occurrence as a pretext for staying with him, and passed the whole time of the action in picking him out of his shell.

"Phew!" said the divine, returning; "an inglorious victory: but it deserves a devil and a bowl of punch."

Mr. Chainmail.—A wassail-bowl.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—No, sir. No more of the twelfth century for me.

Mr. Chainmail.—Nay, doctor. The twelfth century has backed you well. Its manners and habits, its community of kind feelings between master and man, are the true remedy for these ebullitions.

Mr. Toogood.—Something like it: improved by my diagram: arts for arms.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—No wassail-bowl for me. Give me an unsophisticated bowl of punch, which belongs to that blissful middle period, after the Jacquerie was down, and before the march of mind was up. But, see, who is floundering in the water?

Proceeding to the edge of the moat, they fished up Mr. Firedamp, who had missed his way back, and tumbled in. He was drawn out, exclaiming, "that he had taken his last dose of *malaria* in this world."

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Tut, man; dry clothes, a turkey's leg and rump, well devilled, and a quart of strong punch, will set all to rights.

"Wood embers," said Mr. Firedamp, when he had been accommodated with a change of clothes, "there is no antidote to *malaria* like the smoke of wood embers; pine embers." And he placed himself, with his mouth open, close by the fire.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—Punch, sir, punch: there is no antidote like punch.

Mr. Chainmail.—Well, doctor, you shall be indulged. But I shall have my wassail-bowl nevertheless.

An immense bowl of spiced wine, with roasted apples hissing on its surface, was borne into the hall by four men, followed by an empty bowl of the same dimensions, with all the materials of arrack punch, for the divine's especial brewage. He accinged himself to the task, with his usual heroism;

and having finished it to his entire satisfaction, reminded his host to order in the devil.

The Rev. Dr. Folliott.—I think, Mr. Chainmail, we can amuse ourselves very well here all night. The enemy may be still excubant: and we had better not disperse till daylight. I am perfectly satisfied with my quarters. Let the young folks go on with their gambols; let them dance to your old harper's minstrelsy; and if they please to kiss under the misletoe, whereof I espy a goodly bunch suspended at the end of the hall, let those who like it not, leave it to those who do. Moreover, if among the more sedate portion of the assembly, which, I foresee, will keep me company, there were any to revive the good old custom of singing after supper, so to fill up the intervals of the dances, the steps of night would move more lightly.

Mr. Chainmail.—My Susan will set the example, after she has set that of joining in the rustic dance, according to good customs long departed.

After the first dance, in which all classes of the company mingled, the young lady of the mansion took her harp, and following the reverend gentleman's suggestion, sang a song of the twelfth century.

FLORENCE AND BLANCHFLOR.*

Florence and Blanchflor, loveliest maids,
Within a summer grove,
Amid the flower-enamelled shades
Together talked of love.

A clerk sweet Blanchflor's heart had gained;
Fair Florence loved a knight:
And each with ardent voice maintained
She loved the worthiest wight.

Sweet Blanchflor praised her scholar dear,
As courteous, kind, and true;
Fair Florence said her chevalier
Could every foe subdue.

And Florence scorned the bookworm vain,
Who sword nor spear could raise;
And Blanchflor scorned the unlettered brain
Could sing no lady's praise.

From dearest love, the maidens bright
To deadly hatred fell;
Each turned to shun the other's sight,
And neither said farewell.

* Imitated from the Fabliau, *De Florance et de Blanche Flor, alias Jugement d'Amour.*

The king of birds, who held his court
Within that flowery grove,
Sang loudly: "'T will be rare disport
To judge this suit of love."

Before him came the maidens bright,
With all his birds around,
To judge the cause, if clerk or knight
In love be worthiest found.

The falcon and the sparrow-hawk
Stood forward for the fight:
Ready to do, and not to talk,
They voted for the knight.

And Blanchflor's heart began to fail
Till rose the strong-voiced lark,
And, after him, the nightingale,
And pleaded for the clerk.

The nightingale prevailed at length,
Her pleading had such charms;
So eloquence can conquer strength,
And arts can conquer arms.

The lovely Florence tore her hair,
And died upon the place;
And all the birds assembled there,
Bewailed the mournful case.

They piled up leaves and flowerets rare,
Above the maiden bright,
And sang: "Farewell to Florence fair,
Who too well loved her knight."

Several others of the party sang in the intervals of the dances. Mr. Chainmail handed to Mr. Trillo another ballad of the twelfth century, of a merrier character than the former. Mr. Trillo readily accommodated it with an air, and sang,—

THE PRIEST AND THE MULBERRY TREE.

Did you hear of the curate who mounted his mare,
And merrily trotted along to the fair?
Of creature more tractable none ever heard,
In the height of her speed she would stop at a word:
And again with a word, when the curate said Hey,
She put forth her mettle, and galloped away.

As near to the gates of the city he rode,
While the sun of September all brilliantly glowed,
The good priest discovered, with eyes of desire,
A mulberry tree in a hedge of wild briar;
On boughs long and lofty, in many a green shoot,
Hung large, black, and glossy, the beautiful fruit.

* Imitated from the Fabliau, *Du Provoire qui mengea des Mûres*

The curate was hungry and thirsty to boot;
He shrunk from the thorns, though he longed for the fruit;
With a word he arrested his courser's keen speed,
And he stood up erect on the back of his steed;
On the saddle he stood, while the creature stood still,
And he gathered the fruit, till he took his good fill.

"Sure never," he thought, "was a creature so rare,
So docile, so true, as my excellent mare.
Lo, here, how I stand" (and he gazed all around).
"As safe and as steady as if on the ground,
Yet how had it been, if some traveller this way,
Had, dreaming no mischief, but chanced to cry Hey?"

He stood with his head in the mulberry tree,
And he spoke out aloud in his fond reverie:
At the sound of the word, the good mare made a push,
And down went the priest in the wild-briar bush.
He remembered too late, on his thorny green bed,
Much that well may be thought, cannot wisely be said.

Lady Clarinda, being prevailed on to take the harp in her turn, sang the following stanzas:—

In the days of old,
Lovers felt true passion,
Deeming years of sorrow
By a smile repaid.
Now the charms of gold,
Spells of pride and fashion,
Bid them say good morrow
To the best-loved maid.

Through the forests wild,
O'er the mountains lonely,
They were never weary
Honour to pursue:
If the damsel smiled
Once in seven years only,
All their wanderings dreary
Ample guerdon knew.

Now one day's caprice
Weighs down years of smiling,
Youthful hearts are rovers,
Love is bought and sold:
Fortune's gifts may cease,
Love is less beguiling;
Wiser were the lovers,
In the days of old.

The glance which she threw at the Captain, as she sang the last verse, awakened his dormant hopes. Looking round for his rival, he saw that he was not in the hall; and, approach-

ing the lady of his heart, he received one of the sweetest smiles of their earlier days.

After a time, the ladies, and all the females of the party, retired. The males remained on duty with punch and wassail, and dropped off one by one into sweet forgetfulness; so that when the rising sun of December looked through the painted windows on mouldering embers and flickering lamps, the vaulted roof was echoing to a mellifluous concert of noses, from the clarionet of the waiting-boy at one end of the hall, to the double bass of the Reverend Doctor, ringing over the empty punch-bowl, at the other.

CONCLUSION.

From this eventful night, young Crotchet was seen no more on English mould. Whither he had vanished, was a question that could no more be answered in his case than in that of King Arthur, after the battle of Camlan. The great firm of Catchflat and Company figured in the Gazette and paid sixpence in the pound; and it was clear that he had shrunk from exhibiting himself on the scene of his former greatness, shorn of the beams of his paper prosperity. Some supposed him to be sleeping among the undiscoverable secrets of some barbel-pool in the Thames; but those who knew him best were more inclined to the opinion that he had gone across the Atlantic, with his pockets full of surplus capital, to join his old acquaintance, Mr. Touchandgo, in the bank of Dotandcarryonetown.

Lady Clarinda was more sorry for her father's disappointment than her own; but she had too much pride to allow herself to be put up a second time in the money-market; and when the Captain renewed his assiduities, her old partiality for him, combining with a sense of gratitude for a degree of constancy which she knew she scarcely deserved, induced her, with Lord Foolincourt's hard-wrung consent, to share with him a more humble, but less precarious fortune, than that to which she had been destined as the price of a rotten borough.

THE END OF CROTCHET CASTLE.

GRYLL GRANGE.

Opinion governs all mankind,
Like the blind leading of the blind :—
And like the world, men's jobbernoles
Turn round upon their ears the poles,
And what they're confidently told
By no sense else can be control'd.—BUTLER.

[Published in 1861.]

In the following pages, the New Forest is always mentioned as if it were still unenclosed. This is the only state in which the Author has been acquainted with it. Since its enclosure, he has never seen it, and purposes never to do so.

The mottoes are sometimes specially apposite to the chapters to which they are prefixed; but more frequently to the general scope, or to borrow a musical term, the *motivo* of the *operetta*.

GRYLL GRANGE.

CHAPTER I.

MISNOMERS.

Ego sic semper et ubique vixi, ut ultimam quamque ucem, tamquam non redituram, consumerem.—PETRONIUS ARBITER.

Always and everywhere I have so lived, that I might consume the passing light as if it were not to return.

"PALESTINE soup!" said the Reverend Doctor Opimian, dining with his friend Squire Gryll; "a curiously complicated misnomer. We have an excellent old vegetable, the artichoke, of which we eat the head; we have another of subsequent introduction, of which we eat the root, and which we also call artichoke, because it resembles the first in flavour, although, *me judice*, a very inferior affair. This last is a species of the helianthus, or sunflower genus of the *Syngenesia frustranea* class of plants. It is therefore a girasol, or turn-to-the-sun. From this girasol we have made Jerusalem, and from the Jerusalem artichoke we make Palestine soup."

Mr. Gryll.—A very good thing, doctor.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—A very good thing; but a palpable misnomer.

Mr. Gryll.—I am afraid we live in a world of misnomers, and of a worse kind than this. In my little experience I have found that a gang of swindling bankers is a respectable old firm; that men who sell their votes to the highest bidder, and want only "the protection of the ballot" to sell the promise of them to both parties, are a free and independent constituency; that a man who successively betrays everybody that trusts him, and abandons every principle he ever pro-

fessed, is a great statesman, and a Conservative, forsooth, *à nil conservando;* that schemes for breeding pestilence are sanitary improvements; that the test of intellectual capacity is in swallow, and not in digestion; that the art of teaching everything, except what will be of use to the recipient, is national education; and that a change for the worse is reform. Look across the Atlantic. A Sympathizer would seem to imply a certain degree of benevolent feeling. Nothing of the kind. It signifies a ready-made accomplice in any species of political villany. A Know-Nothing would seem to imply a liberal self-diffidence—on the scriptural principle that the beginning of knowledge is to know that thou art ignorant. No such thing. It implies furious political dogmatism, enforced by bludgeons and revolvers. A Locofoco is the only intelligible term: a fellow that would set any place on fire to roast his own eggs. A Filibuster is a pirate under national colours; but I suppose the word in its origin implies something virtuous: perhaps a friend of humanity.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—More likely a friend of roaring—Φιλοβωστρης—in the sense in which roaring is used by our old dramatists; for which see Middleton's *Roaring Girl*, and the commentators thereon.*

Mr. Gryll.—While we are on the subject of misnomers, what say you to the wisdom of Parliament?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Why, sir, I do not call that a misnomer. The term wisdom is used in a parliamentary sense. The wisdom of Parliament is a wisdom *sui generis.* It is not like any other wisdom. It is not the wisdom of Socrates, nor the wisdom of Solomon. It is the wisdom of Parliament. It is not easily analysed or defined; but it is very easily understood. It has achieved wonderful things by itself, and still more when Science has come to its aid. Between them, they have poisoned the Thames, and killed the fish in the river. A little further development of the same wisdom and

* "*Roaring boys* was a cant term for the riotous, quarrelsome blades of the time, who abounded in London, and took pleasure in annoying its quieter inhabitants. Of *Roaring Girls*, the heroine of the present play was the choicest specimen. Her real name was *Mary Frith*, but she was most commonly known by that of *Moll Cutpurse.*"—DYCE. She wore male apparel, smoked, fought, robbed on the highway, kept all minor thieves in subjection, and compelled the restitution of stolen goods, when duly paid for her services.

science will complete the poisoning of the air, and kill the dwellers on the banks. It is pleasant that the precious effluvium has been brought so efficiently under the Wisdom's own wise nose. Thereat the nose, like Trinculo's, has been in great indignation. The Wisdom has ordered the Science to do something. The Wisdom does not know what, nor the Science either. But the Wisdom has empowered the Science to spend some millions of money; and this, no doubt, the Science will do. When the money has been spent, it will be found that the something has been worse than nothing. The Science will want more money to do some other something, and the Wisdom will grant it. *Redit labor actus in orbem.** But you have got on moral and political ground. My remark was merely on a perversion of words, of which we have an inexhaustible catalogue.

Mr. Gryll.—Whatever ground we take, doctor, there is one point common to most of these cases: the word presents an idea which does not belong to the subject, critically considered. Palestine soup is not more remote from the true Jerusalem, than many an honourable friend from public honesty and honour. However, doctor, what say you to a glass of old Madeira, which I really believe is what it is called?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—*In vino veritas.* I accept with pleasure.

Miss Gryll.—You and my uncle, doctor, get up a discussion on everything that presents itself; dealing with your theme like a series of variations in music. You have run half round the world *àpropos* of the soup. What say you to the fish?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Premising that this is a remarkably fine slice of salmon, there is much to be said about fish: but not in the way of misnomers. Their names are single and simple. Perch, sole, cod, eel, carp, char, skate, tench, trout, brill, bream, pike, and many others, plain monosyllables: salmon, dory, turbot, gudgeon, lobster, whitebait, grayling, haddock, mullet, herring, oyster, sturgeon, flounder, turtle, plain dissyllables: only two trisyllables worth naming, anchovy and mackerel; unless any one should be disposed to stand up for halibut, which, for my part, I have excommunicated.

Mr. Gryll.—I agree with you on that point; but I think

* The labour returns, compelled into a circle.

you have named one or two that might as well keep it company.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I do not think I have named a single unpresentable fish.

Mr. Gryll.—Bream, doctor: there is not much to be said for bream.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—On the contrary, sir, I think there is much to be said for him. In the first place, there is the authority of the monastic brotherhoods, who are universally admitted to have been connoisseurs in fish, and in the mode of preparing it; and you will find bream pie set down as a prominent item of luxurious living in the indictments prepared against them at the dissolution of the monasteries. The work of destruction was rather too rapid, and I fear the receipt is lost. But he can still be served up as an excellent stew, provided always that he is full-grown, and has swum all his life in clear running water. I call everything fish that seas, lakes, and rivers furnish to cookery: though, scientifically, a turtle is a reptile, and a lobster an insect. Fish, Miss Gryll—I could discourse to you on fish by the hour: but for the present I will forbear: as Lord Curryfin is coming down to Thornback Bay, to lecture the fishermen on fish and fisheries, and to astonish them all with the science of their art. You will, no doubt, be curious to hear him. There will be some reserved seats.

Miss Gryll.—I shall be very curious to hear him, indeed. I have never heard a lecturing lord. The fancy of lords and gentlemen to lecture everybody on everything, everywhere, seems to me something very comical; but perhaps it is something very serious, gracious in the lecturer, and instructive to the audience. I shall be glad to be cured of my unbecoming propensity to laugh whenever I hear of a lecturing lord.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I hope, Miss Gryll, you will not laugh at Lord Curryfin: for you may be assured nothing will be farther from his lordship's intention than to say anything in the slightest degree droll.

Mr. Gryll.—Doctor Johnson was astonished at the mania for lectures, even in his day, when there were no lecturing lords. He thought little was to be learned from lectures, unless where, as in chemistry, the subject required illustration by experiment. Now, if your lord is going to exhibit experiments in the art of cooking fish, with specimens in sufficient

number for all his audience to taste, I have no doubt his lecture will be well attended, and a repetition earnestly desired.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I am afraid the lecture will not have the aid of such pleasant adventitious attractions. It will be a pure scientific exposition, carefully classified, under the several divisions and subdivisions of Ichthyology, Entomology, Herpetology, and Conchology. But I agree with Doctor Johnson, that little is to be learned from lectures. For the most part those who do not already understand the subject will not understand the lecture, and those who do will learn nothing from it. The latter will hear many things they would like to contradict, which the *bienséance* of the lecture-room does not allow. I do not comprehend how people can find amusement in lectures. I should much prefer a *tenson* of the twelfth century, when two or three masters of the *Gai Saber* discussed questions of love and chivalry.

Miss Gryll.—I am afraid, doctor, our age is too prosy for that sort of thing. We have neither wit enough, nor poetry enough, to furnish the disputants. I can conceive a state of society in which such *tensons* would form a pleasant winter evening amusement: but that state of society is not ours.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Well, Miss Gryll, I should like, some winter evening, to challenge you to a *tenson*, and your uncle should be umpire. I think you have wit enough by nature, and I have poetry enough by memory, to supply a fair portion of the requisite materials, without assuming an absolute mastery of the *Gai Saber*.

Miss Gryll.—I shall accept the challenge, doctor. The wit on one side will, I am afraid, be very shortcoming; but the poetry on the other will no doubt be abundant.

Mr. Gryll.—Suppose, doctor, you were to get up a *tenson* a little more relative to our own wise days. Spirit-rapping, for example, is a fine field. *Nec pueri credunt . . . . Sed tu vera puta.** You might go beyond the limits of a *tenson*. There is ample scope for an Aristophanic comedy. In the contest between the Just and the Unjust in the *Clouds*, and in other scenes of Aristophanes, you have ancient specimens of something very like *tensons*, except that love has not much share in them. Let us for a moment suppose this same spirit-rapping to be true—dramatically so, at least. Let us

* Not even boys believe it: but suppose it to be true.

fit up a stage for the purpose: make the invoked spirits visible as well as audible: and calling before us some of the illustrious of former days, ask them what they think of us and our doings? Of our astounding progress of intellect? Our march of mind? Our higher tone of morality? Our vast diffusion of education? Our art of choosing the most unfit man by competitive examination?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—You had better not bring on many of them at once, nor ask many similar questions, or the chorus of ghostly laughter will be overwhelming. I imagine the answer would be something like Hamlet's: "You yourselves, sirs, shall be as wise as we were, if, like crabs, you could go backward." It is thought something wonderful that uneducated persons should believe in witchcraft in the nineteenth century: as if educated persons did not believe in grosser follies: such as this same spirit-rapping, unknown tongues, clairvoyance, table-turning, and all sorts of fanatical impositions, having for the present their climax in Mormonism. Herein all times are alike. There is nothing too monstrous for human credulity. I like the notion of the Aristophanic comedy. But it would require a numerous company, especially as the chorus is indispensable. The *tenson* may be carried on by two.

Mr. Gryll.—I do not see why we should not have both.

Miss Gryll.—Oh pray, doctor! let us have the comedy. We hope to have a houseful at Christmas, and I think we may get it up well, chorus and all. I should so like to hear what my great ancestor, Gryllus, thinks of us: and Homer, and Dante, and Shakespeare, and Richard the First, and Oliver Cromwell.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—A very good *dramatis personæ*. With these, and the help of one or two Athenians and Romans, we may arrive at a tolerable judgment on our own immeasurable superiority to everything that has gone before us.

Before we proceed farther, we will give some account of our interlocutors.

CHAPTER II.

THE SQUIRE AND HIS NIECE.

FORTUNA . SPONDET . MULTA . MULTIS . PRAESTAT . NEMINI. VIVE . IN . DIES . ET . HORAS . NAM . PROPRIUM . EST . NIHIL.*
Marmor vetus apud Feam, ad Hor. Epist. i. 11, 23.

Fortune makes many promises to many,
Keeps them to none. Live to the days and hours,
For nothing is your own.

GREGORY GRYLL, Esq., of Gryll Grange in Hampshire, on the borders of the New Forest, in the midst of a park which was a little forest in itself, reaching nearly to the sea, and well stocked with deer, having a large outer tract, where a numerous light-rented and well-conditioned tenantry fattened innumerable pigs, considered himself well located for what he professed to be, *Epicuri de grege porcus*,† and held, though he found it difficult to trace the pedigree, that he was lineally descended from the ancient and illustrious Gryllus, who maintained against Ulysses the superior happiness of the life of other animals to that of the life of man.‡

* This inscription appears to consist of comic senarii, slightly dislocated for the inscriptional purpose.

Spondet [illegible]
Fortuna multa multis, praestat nemini.
Vive in dies et horas : nam proprium est nihil.

† *A pig from the herd of Epicurus.* The old philosophers accepted good-humouredly the disparaging terms attached to them by their enemies or rivals. The Epicureans acquiesced in the pig, the Cynics in the dog, and Cleanthes was content to be called the Ass of Zeno as being alone capable of bearing the burthen of the Stoic philosophy.

‡ PLUTARCH. *Bruta animalia ratione uti.* Gryllus in this dialogue, seems to have the best of the argument. Spenser, however, did not think so, when he introduced his Gryll, in the Paradise of Acrasia, reviling Sir Guyon's Palmer for having restored him to the human form.

Streightway he with his virtuous staff them strooke,
And streight of beasts they comely men became :
Yet being men they did unmanly looke,
And stared ghastly, some for inward shame,
And some for wrath to see their captive dame :
But one above the rest in speci
That had an hog been la [illegible]
Repyned greatly, and [illegible]

It might seem that, to a man who traced his ancestry from the palace of Circe, the first care would be the continuance of his ancient race; but a wife presented to him the forethought of a perturbation of his equanimity, which he never could bring himself to encounter. He liked to dine well, and withal to dine quietly, and to have quiet friends at his table, with whom he could discuss questions which might afford ample room for pleasant conversation, and none for acrimonious dispute. He feared that a wife would interfere with his dinner, his company, and his after-dinner bottle of port. For the perpetuation of his name, he relied on an orphan niece, whom he had brought up from a child, who superintended his household, and sate at the head of his table. She was to be his heiress, and her husband was to take his name. He left the choice to her, but reserved to himself a veto, if he should think the aspirant unworthy of the honourable appellation.

The young lady had too much taste, feeling, and sense to be likely to make a choice which her uncle would not approve; but time, as it rolled on, foreshadowed a result which the squire had not anticipated. Miss Gryll did not seem likely to make any choice at all. The atmosphere of quiet enjoyment in which she had grown up seemed to have steeped her feelings in its own tranquillity; and still more, the affection which she felt for her uncle, and the conviction that, though he had always premeditated her marriage, her departure from his house would be the severest blow that fate could inflict on him, led her to postpone what she knew must be an

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That had from hoggish forme him brought to naturall.
Said Guyon: "See the mind of beastly man,
That hath so soon forgot the excellence
Of his creation when he life began,
That now he chooseth, with vile difference,
To be a beast, and lacke intelligence."
Fairy Queen, book ii. canto 12.

In Plutarch's dialogue, Ulysses, after his own companions have been restored to the human form, solicits Circe to restore in the same manner any other Greeks who may be under her enchantments. Circe consents, provided they desire it. Gryllus, endowed with speech for the purpose, answers for all, that they had rather remain as they are; and supports the decision by showing the greater comfort of their condition as it is, to what it would probably be if they were again sent forth to share the common lot of mankind. We have unfortunately only the beginning of the dialogue, of which the greater portion has perished.

evil day to him, and might peradventure not be a good one to her.

"Oh, the ancient name of Gryll!" sighed the squire to himself. "What if it should pass away in the nineteenth century, after having lived from the time of Circe!"

Often, indeed, when he looked at her at the head of his table, the star of his little circle, joyous herself, and the source of joy in others, he thought the actual state of things admitted no change for the better, and the perpetuity of the old name became a secondary consideration: but though the purpose was dimmed in the evening, it usually brightened in the morning. In the meantime the young lady had many suitors, who were permitted to plead their cause, though they made little apparent progress.

Several young gentlemen of fair promise, seemingly on the point of being accepted, had been, each in his turn, suddenly and summarily dismissed. Why, was the young lady's secret. If it were known, it would be easy, she said, in these days of artificial manners, to counterfeit the presence of the qualities she liked, and, still more easy, the absence of the qualities she disliked. There was sufficient diversity in the characters of the rejected to place conjecture at fault, and Mr. Gryll began to despair.

The uncle and niece had come to a clear understanding on this subject. He might present to her attention any one whom he might deem worthy to be her suitor, and she might reject the suitor without assigning a reason for so doing. In this way several had appeared and passed away, like bubbles on a stream.

Was the young lady over fastidious, or were none among the presented worthy, or had that which was to touch her heart not yet appeared?

Mr. Gryll was the godfather of his niece, and to please him, she had been called Morgana. He had had some thoughts of calling her Circe, but acquiesced in the name of a sister enchantress, who had worked out her own idea of a beautiful garden, and exercised similar power over the minds and forms of men.

CHAPTER III.

THE DUKE'S FOLLY.

Τέγγε πνεύμονας οἴνῳ· τὸ γὰρ ἄστρον περιτέλλεται·
Ἃ δ' ὥρα χαλεπά, πάντα δὲ διψᾷ ὑπὸ καύματος.—ALCAEUS.

Moisten your lungs with wine. The dog-star's sway
Returns, and all things thirst beneath his ray.

FALERNUM . OPIMIANUM . ANNORUM . CENTUM.

Heu! heu! inquit Trimalchio, ergo diutius vivit vinum quam homuncio! Quare τέγγε πνεύμονας faciamus. Vita vinum est.—PETRONIUS ARBITER.

FALERNIAN OPIMIAN WINE AN HUNDRED YEARS OLD.

Alas! Alas! exclaimed Trimalchio. This wine lives longer than man! Wherefore, let us sing, "moisten your lungs." Wine is life.

WORDSWORTH'S question, in his *Poet's Epitaph*,

Art thou a man of purple cheer,
A rosy man, right plump to see?

might have been answered in the affirmative by the Reverend Doctor Opimian. The worthy divine dwelt in an agreeably situated vicarage, on the outskirts of the New Forest. A good living, a comfortable patrimony, a moderate dowry with his wife, placed him sufficiently above the cares of the world to enable him to gratify all his tastes without minute calculations of cost. His tastes, in fact, were four: a good library, a good dinner, a pleasant garden, and rural walks. He was an athlete in pedestrianism. He took no pleasure in riding, either on horseback or in a carriage; but he kept a brougham for the service of Mrs. Opimian, and for his own occasional use in dining out.

Mrs. Opimian was domestic. The care of the doctor had supplied her with the best books on cookery, to which his own inventive genius and the kindness of friends had added a large, and always increasing manuscript volume. The lady studied them carefully, and by diligent superintendence left the doctor nothing to desire in the service of his table. His cellar was well stocked with a selection of the best vintages,

under his own especial charge. In all its arrangements, his house was a model of order and comfort; and the whole establishment partook of the genial physiognomy of the master. From the master and mistress to the cook, and from the cook to the tom cat, there was about the inhabitants of the vicarage a sleek and purring rotundity of face and figure that denoted community of feelings, habits, and diet; each in its kind, of course, for the doctor had his port, the cook her ale, and the cat his milk, in sufficiently liberal allowance. In the morning, while Mrs. Opimian found ample occupation in the details of her household duties and the care of her little family, the doctor, unless he had predestined the whole day to an excursion, studied in his library. In the afternoon he walked; in the evening he dined; and after dinner read to his wife and family, or heard his children read to him. This was his home life. Now and then he dined out; more frequently than at any other place with his friend and neighbour, Mr. Gryll, who entirely sympathized with him in his taste for a good dinner.

Beyond the limits of his ordinary but within those of his occasional range was a solitary round tower on an eminence backed with wood, which had probably in old days been a landmark for hunters; but having in modern days no very obvious use, was designated, as many such buildings are, by the name of the Folly. The country people called it "The Duke's Folly," though who the Duke in question was nobody could tell. Tradition had dropped his name.

One fine Midsummer day, with a southerly breeze and a cloudless sky, the doctor, having taken an early breakfast, in the process of which he had considerably reduced the altitude of a round of beef, set out with a good stick in his hand and a Newfoundland dog at his heels for one of his longest walks, such as he could only take in the longest days.

Arriving at the Folly, which he had not visited for a long time, he was surprised to find it enclosed, and having at the back the novelty of a covered passage, built of the same gray stone as the tower itself. This passage passed away into the wood at the back, whence was ascending a wreath of smoke which immediately recalled to him the dwelling of Circe.*

* Καὶ τότ' ἐγὼν ἐμὸν ἔγχος ἑλὼν καὶ φάσγανον ὀξὺ
Καρπαλίμως παρὰ νηὸς ἀνήϊον ἐς περιωπὴν,
Εἴπως ἔργα ἴδοιμι βροτῶν ἠνοπήν τε πυθοίμην.
Ἔστην δὲ, σκοπιὴν ἐς παιπαλόεσσαν ἀνελθών,

Indeed, the change before him had much the air of enchantment; and the Circean similitude was not a little enhanced by the antique masonry,* and the expanse of sea which was visible from the eminence. He leaned over the gate, repeated aloud the lines of the *Odyssey*, and fell into a brown study, from which he was aroused by the approach of a young gentleman from within the enclosure.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the doctor, "but my curiosity is excited by what I see here; and if you do not think it impertinent, and would inform me how these changes have come about, I should be greatly obliged."

"Most willingly, sir," said the other; "but if you will walk in, and see what has been done, the obligation will be mine."

The doctor readily accepted the proposal. The stranger led the way, across an open space in the wood, to a circular hall, from each side of which a wide passage led, on the left hand to the tower, and on the right to the new building, which was so masked by the wood, as not to be visible except from within the glade. It was a square structure of plain stone, much in the same style as that of the tower.

The young gentleman took the left-hand passage, and introduced the doctor to the lower floor of the tower.

"I have divided the tower," he observed, "into three rooms: one on each floor. This is the dining-room; above

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Καὶ μοι ἐείσατο καπνὸς ἀπὸ χθονὸς εὐρυοδείης,
Κίρκης ἐν μεγάροισι, διὰ δρυμὰ πυκνὰ καὶ ὕλην.
Μερμήριξα δ' ἔπειτα κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμὸν
Ἐλθεῖν, ἠδὲ πυθέσθαι, ἐπεὶ ἴδον αἴθοπα καπνόν.
Od. K. 145—162.

I climbed a cliff with spear and sword in hand,
Whose ridge o'erlooked a shady length of land:
To learn if aught of mortal works appear,
Or cheerful voice of mortal strike the ear.
From the high point I marked, in distant view,
A stream of curling smoke ascending blue,
And spiry tops, the tufted trees above,
Of Circe's palace bosomed in the grove.
Thither to haste, the region to explore,
Was first my thought . . .

* Εὗρον δ' ἐν βήσσῃσι τετυγμένα δώματα Κίρκης
Ξεστοῖσιν λάεσσι, περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ.—*Ib.* 210, 211.
The palace in a woody vale they found,
High-raised of stone, a shaded space around.—Pope.

it is my bedroom; above it again is my library. The prospect is good from all the floors, but from the library it is most extensive, as you look over the woods far away into the open sea."

"A noble dining-room," said the doctor. "The height is well proportioned to the diameter. That circular table well becomes the form of the room, and gives promise of a fine prospect in its way."

"I hope you will favour me by forming a practical judgment on the point," said his new acquaintance, as he led the way to the upper floor, the doctor marvelling at the extreme courtesy with which he was treated. "This building," thought he, "might belong to the age of chivalry, and my young host might be Sir Calidore himself." But the library brought him back to other days.

The walls were covered with books, the upper portion accessible by a gallery, running entirely round the apartment, The books of the lower circle were all classical; those of the upper, English, Italian, and French, with a few volumes in Spanish.

The young gentleman took down a Homer, and pointed out to the doctor the passage which, as he leaned over the gate, he had repeated from the *Odyssey*. This accounted to the doctor for the deference shown to him. He saw at once into the Greek sympathy.

"You have a great collection of books," said the doctor.

"I believe," said the young gentleman, "I have all the best books in the languages I cultivate. Horne Tooke says: 'Greek, Latin, Italian, and French, are unfortunately the usual bounds of an English scholar's acquisition." I think any scholar fortunate whose acquisition extends so far. These languages and our own comprise, I believe, with a few rare exceptions, all the best books in the world. I may add Spanish, for the sake of Cervantes, Lope de Vega, and Calderon. It was a *dictum* of Porson, that 'Life is too short to learn German:' meaning, I apprehend, not that it is too difficult to be acquired within the ordinary space of life, but that there is nothing in it to compensate for the portion of life bestowed on its acquirement, however little that may be."*

* Mr. Hayward's French hotel-keeper in Germany had a different, but not less cogent reason for not learning German. "Whenever a dish *attracts attention* by the art displayed in its conception or pre-

The doctor was somewhat puzzled what to say. He had some French and more Italian, being fond of romances of chivalry; and in Greek and Latin he thought himself a match for any man; but he was more occupied with speculations on the position and character of his new acquaintance, than on the literary opinions he was enunciating. He marvelled to find a young man, rich enough to do what he here saw done, doing anything of the kind, and fitting up a library in a solitary tower, instead of passing his time in clubs and *réunions*, and other pursuits and pleasures of general society. But he thought it necessary to say something to the point, and rejoined:

"Porson was a great man, and his *dictum* would have weighed with me if I had had a velleity towards German; but I never had any. But I rather wonder you should have placed your library on the upper instead of the middle floor. The prospect, as you have observed, is fine from all the floors; but here you have the sea and the sky to the greatest advantage; and I would assign my best look-out to the hours of dressing and undressing; the first thing in the morning, the last at night, and the half-hour before dinner. You can give greater attention to the views before you, when you are following operations, important certainly, but mechanical from repetition, and uninteresting in themselves, than when you are engaged in some absorbing study, which probably shuts out all perception of the external world."

"What you say is very true, sir," said the other; "but you know the lines of Milton—

> Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,
> Be seen in some high lonely tower,
> Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
> With thrice great Hermes.

paration, apart from the material, the artist will commonly be discovered to be French. Many years ago we had the curiosity to inquire, at the Hôtel de France, at Dresden, to whom our party were indebted for the enjoyment they had derived from a *suprême de volaille*, and were informed the cook and the master of the hotel were one and the same person: a Frenchman, *ci-devant chef* of a Russian minister. He had been eighteen years in Germany, but knew not a word of any language but his own. '*A quoi bon, messieurs,*' was his reply to our expression of astonishment; '*à quoi bon, apprendre la langue d'un peuple qui ne posséde pas une cuisine?*"—*Art of Dining*, pp. 69, 70.

"These lines have haunted me from very early days, and principally influenced me in purchasing this tower, and placing my library on the top of it. And I have another association with such a mode of life."

A French clock in the library struck two, and the young gentleman proposed to his visitor to walk into the house. They accordingly descended the stairs, and crossed the entrance-hall to a large drawing-room, simply but handsomely furnished; having some good pictures on the walls, an organ at one end of the room, a piano and harp at the other, and an elegantly disposed luncheon in the middle.

"At this time of the year," said the young gentleman, "I lunch at two, and dine at eight. This gives me two long divisions of the morning, for any in-door and out-door purposes. I hope you will partake with me. You will not find a precedent in Homer for declining the invitation."

"Really," said the doctor, "that argument is cogent and conclusive. I accept with pleasure: and indeed my long walk has given me an appetite."

"Now you must know," said the young gentleman, "I have none but female domestics. You will see my two waiting-maids."

He rang the bell, and the specified attendants appeared: two young girls about sixteen and seventeen; both pretty, and simply, but very becomingly, dressed.

Of the provision set before him the doctor preferred some cold chicken and tongue. Madeira and sherry were on the table, and the young attendants offered him hock and claret. The doctor took a capacious glass from each of the fair cup-bearers, and pronounced both wines excellent, and deliciously cool. He declined more, not to overheat himself in walking, and not to infringe on his anticipations of dinner. The dog, who had behaved throughout with exemplary propriety, was not forgotten. The doctor rose to depart.

"I think," said his host, "I may now ask you the Homeric question—Τίς; πόθεν εἶς ἀνδρῶν." *

"Most justly," said the doctor. "My name is Theophilus Opimian. I am a Doctor of Divinity, and the incumbent of Ashbrook-cum-Ferndale."

"I am simply," said the other, "Algernon Falconer. I

* Who, and whence, are you?

have inherited some money, but no land. Therefore having the opportunity, I made this purchase to fit it up in my own fashion, and live in it in my own way."

The doctor preparing to depart, Mr. Falconer proposed to accompany him part of the way, and calling out another Newfoundland dog, who immediately struck up a friendship with his companion, he walked away with the Doctor, the two dogs gambolling before them.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FOREST.—A SOLILOQUY ON HAIR.

Mille hominum species, et rerum discolor usus :
Velle suum cuique est, nec voto vivitur uno.—PERSIUS.

In mind and taste men differ as in frame :
Each has his special will, and few the same.

THE REV. DR. OPIMIAN.—It strikes me as singular that, with such a house, you should have only female domestics.

Mr. Falconer.—It is not less singular perhaps that they are seven sisters, all the children of two old servants of my father and mother. The eldest is about my own age, twenty-six, so that they have all grown up with me in time and place. They live in great harmony together, and divide among them the charge of all the household duties. Those whom you saw are the two youngest.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—If the others acquit themselves as well, you have a very efficient staff; but seven young women as the establishment of one young bachelor, for such I presume you to be (*Mr. Falconer assented*), is something new and strange. The world is not over charitable.

Mr. Falconer.—The world will never suppose a good motive, where it can suppose a bad one. I would not willingly offend any of its prejudices. I would not affect eccentricity. At the same time I do not feel disposed to be put out of my way because it is not the way of the world—*Le Chemin du Monde*, as a Frenchman entitled Congreve's comedy*—but I

* Congreve, le meilleur auteur comique d'Angleterre : ses pièces les plus estimées sont *Le Fourbe*, *Le Vieux Garçon*, *Amour pour*

assure you these seven young women live here as they might do in the temple of Vesta. It was a singular combination of circumstances that induced and enabled me to form such an establishment; but I would not give it up, nor alter it, nor diminish it, nor increase it, for any earthly consideration.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—You hinted that, besides Milton's verses, you had another association of ideas with living in the top of a tower.

Mr. Falconer.—I have read of somebody who lived so, and admitted to his *sanctum* only one young person, a niece or a daughter, I forget which, but on very rare occasions would descend to speak to some visitor who had previously propitiated the young lady to obtain him an interview. At last the young lady introduced one who proposed for her, and gained the consent of the recluse (I am not sure of his name, but I always call him Lord Noirmont) to carry her off. I think this was associated with some affliction that was cured, or some mystery that was solved, and that the hermit returned into the every-day world. I do not know where I read it, but I have always liked the idea of living like Lord Noirmont, when I shall have become a sufficiently disappointed man.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—You look as little like a disappointed man as any I have seen; but as you have neither daughter nor niece, you would have seven links instead of one between the top of your tower and the external world.

Mr. Falconer.—We are all born to disappointment. It is as well to be prospective. Our happiness is not in what is, but in what is to be. We may be disappointed in our every-day realities, and if not, we may make an ideality of the unattainable, and quarrel with nature for not giving what she has not to give. It is unreasonable to be so disappointed, but it is disappointment not the less.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—It is something like the disappointment of the men of Gotham when they could not fish up the moon from the sea.

Mr. Falconer.—It is very like it, and there are more of us in the predicament of the men of Gotham than are ready to acknowledge the similitude.

Amour, L'Epouse du Matin, Le Chemin du Monde.—Manuel Bibliographique. Par G. Peigniot. Paris. 1800.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I am afraid I am too matter-of-fact to sympathize very clearly with this form of æstheticism; but here is a charming bit of forest scenery. Look at that old oak with the deer under it; the long and deep range of fern running up from it to that beech-grove on the upland, the lights and shadows on the projections and recesses of the wood, and the blaze of foxglove in its foreground. It is a place in which a poet might look for a glimpse of a Hamadryad.

Mr. Falconer.—Very beautiful for the actual present—too beautiful for the probable future. Some day or other the forest will be disforested; the deer will be either banished or destroyed; the wood will be either shut up or cut down. Here is another basis for disappointment. The more we admire it now, the more we shall regret it then. The admiration of sylvan and pastoral scenery is at the mercy of an enclosure act, and instead of the glimpse of a Hamadryad you will some time see a large board warning you off the premises under penalty of rigour of law.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—But, my dear young friend, you have yourself enclosed a favourite old resort of mine and of many others. I did not see such a board as you speak of; but there is an effective fence which answers the purpose.

Mr. Falconer.—True; but when the lot of crown land was put up for sale, it was sure to be purchased and shut up by somebody. At any rate, I have not interfered with the external picturesque; and I have been much more influenced by an intense desire of shutting up myself than of shutting up the place, merely because it is my property.

About half way from their respective homes the two new friends separated, the doctor having promised to walk over again soon to dine and pass the night.

The doctor soliloquized as he walked.

"Strange metamorphosis of the old tower. A good dining-room. A good library. A bedroom between them: he did not show it me. Good wine: excellent. Pretty waiting-maids, exceedingly pretty. Two of seven Vestals, who maintain the domestic fire on the hearth of the young Numa. By-the-way, they had something of the Vestal costume: white dresses with purple borders. But they had nothing on their heads but their own hair, very gracefully arranged. The Vestals had head-dresses, which hid their hair, if they had

any. They were shaved on admission. Perhaps the hair was allowed to grow again. Perhaps not. I must look into the point. If not, it was a wise precaution. "Hair, the only grace of form,"* says the *Arbiter Elegantiarum*, who compares a bald head to a fungus.† A head without hair, says Ovid, is as a field without grass, and a shrub without leaves.‡ Venus herself, if she had appeared with a bald head, would not have tempted Apuleius:§ and I am of his mind. A husband, in Menander,‖ in a fit of jealous madness, shaves his wife's head; and when he sees what he has made of her, rolls at her feet in a paroxysm of remorse. He was at any rate safe from jealousy till it grew again. And here is a subtlety of Euripides, which none of his commentators have seen into. Ægisthus has married Electra to a young farmer, who cultivates his own land. He respects the Princess from magnanimity, and restores her a pure virgin to her brother Orestes. "Not probable," say some critics. But I say highly probable: for she comes on with her head

* Quod solum formæ decus est, cecidere capilli.—PETRONIUS, c. 109.

† . . . . lævior . . . . rotundo
Horti tubere, quod creavit unda.—*Ibid.*

"A head, to speak in the gardener's style, is a bulbous excrescence, growing up between the shoulders."—G. A. STEEVENS: *Lecture on Heads.*

‡ Turpe pecus mutilum; turpe est sine gramine campus;
Et sine fronde frutex; et sine crine caput.
OVID: *Artis Amatoriæ*, iii. 249.

§ At vero, quod nefas dicere, neque sit ullum hujus rei tam dirum exemplum: si cujuslibet eximiæ pulcherrimæque fœminæ caput capillo exspoliaveris, et faciem nativâ specie nudaveris, licet illa cœlo dejecta, mari edita, fluctibus educata, licet, inquam, Venus ipsa fuerit, licet omni Gratiarum choro stipata, et toto Cupidinum populo comitata, et balteo suo cincta, cinnama fragrans, et balsama rorans, calva processerit, placere non poterit nec Vulcano suo.—APULEIUS: *Metamorph.* ii. 25.

But, indeed, what it is profanation to speak, nor let there be hereof any so dire example, if you despoil of its hair the head of any most transcendent and perfectly beautiful woman, and present her face thus denuded of its native loveliness, though it were even she, the descended from heaven, the born of the sea, the educated in the waves, though, I say, it were Venus herself, attended by the Graces, surrounded by the Loves, cinctured with her girdle, fragrant with spices, and dewy with balsams, yet, if she appeared with a bald head, she could not please even her own Vulcan.

‖ Περικειρομένη.

shaved. There is the talisman, and the consummate artifice of the great poet. It is ostensibly a symbol of grief; but not the less a most efficient ally of the aforesaid magnanimity. "In mourning," says Aristotle, "sympathizing with the dead, we deform ourselves by cutting off our hair." And truly, it is sympathy in approximation. A woman's head shaved is a step towards a death's head. As a symbol of grief, it was not necessary to the case of Electra; for in the sister tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles, her grief is equally great, and she appears with flowing hair; but in them she is an unmarried maid, and there is no dramatic necessity for so conspicuous an antidote to her other charms. Neither is it according to custom; for in recent grief the whole hair was sacrificed, but in the memory of an old sorrow, only one or two curls were cut off.* Therefore, it was the dramatic necessity of a counter-charm that influenced Euripides. Helen knew better than to shave her head in a case where custom required it. Euripides makes Electra reproach Helen for thus preserving her beauty;† which further illustrates his purpose in shaving the head of Electra where custom did not require it. And Terence showed his taste in not shaving the head of his heroine in the *Phormio*, though the severity of Athenian custom would have required it. Her beauty shone through her dishevelled hair, but with no hair at all she would not have touched the heart of Antipho. Ἀλλὰ τίη μοι ταῦτα φίλος διελέξατο θυμός; But wherefore does my mind discourse these things to me? suspending dismal images on lovely realities? for the luxuriant hair of these young girls is of no ordinary beauty. Their tresses have not been deposited under the shadow of the sacred lotus, as Pliny tells us those of the Vestals were. Well, this young gentleman's establishment may be perfectly moral, strictly correct, but in one sense it is morality thrown away: the world will give him no credit for it. I am sure Mrs. Opimian will not. If he were married it would be different. But I think, if he were to marry now, there would be a fiercer fire than Vesta's among his Lares. The temple would be too hot for the seven virgins. I suppose, as he is so resolute against change, he does not mean to marry. Then he talks about anticipated disappointment in some unrealizable

* SOPHOCLES: *Electra*, v. 449.
† EURIPIDES: Orestes, v. 128.

ideality, leading him to live like Lord Noirmont, whom I never heard of before. He is far enough off from that while he lunches and walks as he does, and no doubt dines in accordance. He will not break his heart for any moon in the water, if his cooks are as good as his waiting-maids, and the wine which he gave me is a fair specimen of his cellar. He is learned too. Greek seems to be the strongest chord in his sympathies. If it had not been for the singular accident of his overhearing me repeat half a dozen lines of Homer, I should not have been asked to walk in. I might have leaned over the gate till sunset, and have had no more notice taken of me than if I had been a crow.

At dinner, the doctor narrated his morning adventure to Mrs. Opimian, and found her, as he had anticipated, most virtuously uncharitable with respect to the seven sisters. She did not depart from her usual serenity, but said, with equal calmness and decision, that she had no belief in the virtue of young men.

"My dear," said the doctor, "it has been observed, though I forget by whom, that there is in every man's life a page which is usually doubled down. Perhaps there is such a page in the life of our young friend; but if there be, the volume which contains it is not in the same house with the seven sisters."

The doctor could not retire to rest without verifying his question touching the hair of the Vestals; and stepping into his study, was taking out an old folio, to consult *Lipsius de Vestalibus*, when a passage flashed across his memory which seemed decisive on the point. "How could I overlook it?" he thought—

> "'Ignibus Iliacis aderam: cum lapsa capillis
> Decidit ante sacros lanea vitta focos:'*

says Rhea Sylvia in the *Fasti*."

He took down the *Fasti*, and turning over the leaves, lighted on another line:—

> Attonitæ flebant demisso crine ministræ.†

* The woollen wreath, by Vesta's inmost shrine,
Fell from my hair before the fire divine.

† With hair dishevelled wept the vestal train.

With the note of an old commentator: "This will enlighten those who doubt if the Vestals wore their hair." "I infer," said the doctor, "that I have doubted in good company; but it is clear that the Vestals did wear their hair of second growth. But if it was wrapped up in wool, it might as well not have been there. The *vitta* was at once the symbol and the talisman of chastity. Shall I recommend my young friend to wrap up the heads of his Vestals in a *vitta*? It would be safer for all parties. But I cannot imagine a piece of advice for which the giver would receive less thanks. And I had rather see them as they are. So I shall let well alone."

CHAPTER V.

THE SEVEN SISTERS.

Εὔφραινε σαυτὸν· πίνε· τὸν καθ' ἡμέραν
Βίον λογίζου σόν, τὰ δ' ἄλλα τῆς Τύχης.
EURIPIDES: *Alcestis*.

Rejoice thy spirit: drink: the passing day
Esteem thine own, and all beyond as Fortune's.

THE doctor was not long without remembering his promise to revisit his new acquaintance, and, purposing to remain till the next morning, he set out later in the day. The weather was intensely hot: he walked slowly, and paused more frequently than usual, to rest under the shade of trees. He was shown into the drawing-room, where he was shortly joined by Mr. Falconer, and very cordially welcomed.

The two friends dined together in the lower room of the tower. The dinner and wine were greatly to the doctor's mind. In due time they adjourned to the drawing-room, and the two young hand-maids who had waited at dinner attended with coffee and tea. The doctor then said—"You are well provided with musical instruments. Do you play?"

Mr. Falconer.—No. I have profited by the observation of Doctor Johnson: "Sir, once on a time I took to fiddling; but I found that to fiddle well I must fiddle all my life, and I thought I could do something better."

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Then, I presume, these are pieces of ornamental furniture, for the use of occasional visitors?

Mr. Falconer.—Not exactly. My maids play on them, and sing to them.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Your maids!

Mr. Falconer.—Even so. They have been thoroughly well educated, and are all accomplished musicians.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—And at what time do they usually play on them?

Mr. Falconer.—Every evening about this time, when I am alone.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—And why not when you have company?

Mr. Falconer.—*La Morgue Aristocratique*, which pervades all society, would not tolerate such a proceeding on the part of young women, of whom some had superintended the preparation of the dinner, and others attended on it. It would not have been incongruous in the Homeric age.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Then I hope you will allow it to be not incongruous this evening, Homer being the original *vinculum* between you and me.

Mr. Falconer.—Would you like to hear them?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Indeed I should.

The two younger sisters having answered the summons, and the doctor's wish having been communicated, the seven appeared together, all in the same dress of white and purple.

"The seven Pleiads!" thought the doctor. "What a constellation of beauty!" He stood up and bowed to them, which they gracefully acknowledged.

They then played on, and sang to, the harp and piano. The doctor was enchanted.

After a while, they passed over to the organ, and performed some sacred music of Mozart and Beethoven. They then paused and looked round, as if for instructions.

"We usually end," said Mr. Falconer, "with a hymn to St. Catharine, but perhaps it may not be to your taste; although Saint Catharine is a saint of the English Church Calendar."

"I like all sacred music," said the doctor. "And I am not disposed to object to a saint of the English Church Calendar."

"She is also," said Mr. Falconer, "a most perfect emblem of purity, and in that sense alone there can be no fitter image to be presented to the minds of young women."

"Very true," said the doctor. "And very strange withal," he thought to himself.

The sisters sang their hymn, made their obeisance, and departed.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—The hands of those young women do not show signs of menial work.

Mr. Falconer.—They are the regulating spirits of the household. They have a staff of their own for the coarser and harder work.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Their household duties, then, are such as Homeric damsels discharged in the homes of their fathers, with δμωαί for the lower drudgery?

Mr. Falconer.—Something like it.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Young ladies, in short, in manners and accomplishments, though not in social position; only more useful in a house than young ladies generally are.

Mr. Falconer.—Something like that, too. If you know the tree by its fruit, the manner in which this house is kept may reconcile you to the singularity of the experiment.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I am perfectly reconciled to it. The experiment is eminently successful.

The doctor always finished his day with a tumbler of brandy and water: soda water in summer, and hot water in winter. After his usual draught he retired to his chamber, where he slept like a top, and dreamed of Electra and Nausicaa, Vestals, Pleiads, and Saint Catharine, and woke with the last words he had heard sung on the preceding night still ringing in his ears:—

Dei virgo Catharina,
Lege constans in divinâ
Cœli gemma preciosa,
Margarita fulgida,
Sponsa Christi gloriosa,
Paradisi viola!*

* Virgin bride, supremely bright,
Gem and flower of heavenly light,
Pearl of the empyreal skies,
Violet of Paradise!

CHAPTER VI.

THE RUSTIC LOVER.

Despairing beside a clear stream
A shepherd forsaken was laid.

THE next morning, after a comfortable breakfast, the doctor set out on his walk home. His young friend accompanied him part of the way, and did not part with him till he had obtained a promise of another and longer visit.

The doctor, as usual, soliloquized as he walked. "No doubt these are Vestals. The purity of the establishment is past question. This young gentleman has every requisite which her dearest friends would desire in a husband for Miss Gryll. And she is in every way suited to him. But these seven damsels interpose themselves, like the sevenfold shield of Ajax. There is something very attractive in these damsels:

facies non omnibus una,
Nec diversa tamen: qualem decet esse sororum.*

If I had such an establishment, I should be loath to break it up. It is original, in these days of monotony. It is satisfactory, in these days of uncongenial relations between master and servant. It is effective, in the admirable arrangements of the household. It is graceful, in the personal beauty and tasteful apparel of the maidens. It is agreeable, in their manners, in their accomplishments, in their musical skill. It is like an enchanted palace. Mr. Gryll, who talks so much of Circe, would find himself at home; he might fancy himself waited on by her handmaids, the daughters of fountains, groves, and rivers. Miss Gryll might fancy herself in the dwelling of her namesake, Morgana. But I fear she would be for dealing with it as Orlando did with Morgana, breaking the talisman and dissolving the enchantment. This would be a pity; but it would also be a pity that these two young persons should not come together. But why should I trouble myself with match-making? It is always a thankless office

* Though various features did the sisters grace,
A sister's likeness was in every face.
ADDISON: *Ovid. Met.* l. ii.

If it turns out well, your good service is forgotten. If it turns out ill, you are abused by both parties."

The doctor's soliloquy was cut short by a sound of lamentation, which, as he went on, came to him in louder and louder bursts. He was attracted to the spot whence the sounds proceeded, and had some difficulty in discovering a doleful swain, who was ensconced in a mass of fern, taller than himself if he had been upright; and but that, by rolling over and over in the turbulence of his grief, he had flattened a large space down to the edge of the forest brook near which he reclined, he would have remained invisible in his lair. The tears in his eyes, and the passionate utterances of his voice, contrasted strangely with a round russetin face, which seemed fortified by beef and ale against all possible furrows of care; but against love, even beef and ale, mighty talismans as they are, are feeble barriers. Cupid's arrows had pierced through the *æs triplex* of treble X, and the stricken deer lay mourning by the stream.

The doctor approaching, kindly inquired, "What is the matter?" but was answered only by a redoubled burst of sorrow, and an emphatic rejection of all sympathy.

"You can't do me any good."

"You do not know that," said the doctor. "No man knows what good another can do him till he communicates his trouble."

For some time the doctor could obtain no other answer than the repetition of "You can't do me any good." But at length the patience and kind face of the inquirer had their effect on the sad shepherd, and he brought out with a desperate effort and a more clamorous explosion of grief,

"She won't have me!"

"Who won't have you?" said the doctor.

"Well, if you must know," said the swain, "you must. It's one of the young ladies up at the Folly."

"Young ladies?" said the doctor.

"Servants they call themselves," said the other; "but they are more like ladies, and hold their heads high enough, when one of them won't have me. Father's is one of the best farms for miles round, and it's all his own. He's a true old yeoman, father is. And there's nobody but him and me. And if I had a nice wife, that would be a good housekeeper *for him*, and play and sing to him of an evening—for she can

do anything, she can—read, write, and keep accounts, and play and sing—I've heard her—and make a plum-pudding—I've seen her—we should be as happy as three crickets—four, perhaps, at the year's end: and she won't have me?'

"You have put the question?" said the doctor.

"Plump," said the other. "And she looked at first as if she was going to laugh. She didn't, though. Then she looked serious, and said she was sorry for me. She said she saw I was in earnest. She knew I was a good son, and deserved a good wife; but she couldn't have me. Miss, said I, do you like anybody better? No, she said very heartily."

"That is one comfort," said the doctor.

"What comfort," said the other, "when she won't have me?'

"She may alter her mind," said the doctor, "if she does not prefer any one else. Besides, she only says she can't."

"Can't," said the other, "is civil for won't. That's all."

"Does she say why she can't?" said the doctor.

"Yes," said the other. "She says she and her sisters won't part with each other and their young master."

"Now," said the doctor, "you have not told me which of the seven sisters is the one in question."

"It's the third," said the other. "What they call the second cook. There's a housekeeper and two cooks, and two housemaids and two waiting-maids. But they only manage for the young master. There are others that wait on them."

"And what is her name?" said the doctor.

"Dorothy," said the other; "her name is Dorothy. Their names follow, like A B C, only that A comes last. Betsey, Catherine, Dorothy, Eleanor, Fanny, Grace, Anna. But they told me it was not the alphabet they were christened from; it was the key of A minor, if you know what that means."

"I think I do," said the doctor, laughing. "They were christened from the Greek diotonic scale, and make up two conjunct tetrachords, if you know what that means."

"I can't say I do," said the the other, looking bewildered.

"And so," said the doctor, "the young gentleman, whose name is Algernon, is the Proslambanomenos, or key-note, and makes up the octave. His parents must have designed it as a foretelling, that he and his seven foster-sisters were to live in harmony all their lives. But how did you become acquainted?'

"Why," said the other, "I take a great many things to the house from our farm, and it's generally she that takes them in."

"I know the house well," said the doctor, "and the master, and the maids. Perhaps he may marry, and they may follow the example. Live in hope. Tell me your name."

"Hedgerow," said the other; "Harry Hedgerow. And if you know her, ain't she a beauty?"

"Why, yes," said the doctor; "they are all good-looking."

"And she won't have me," cried the other, but with a more subdued expression. The doctor had consoled him, and given him a ray of hope. And they went on their several ways.

The doctor resumed his soliloquy.

"Here is the semblance of something towards a solution of the difficulty. If one of the damsels should marry, it would break the combination. One will not by herself. But what if seven apple-faced Hedgerows should propose simultaneously, seven notes in the key of A minor, an octave below? Stranger things have happened. I have read of six brothers who had the civility to break their necks in succession, that the seventh, who was the hero of the story, might inherit an estate. But, again and again, why should I trouble myself with match-making? I had better leave things to take their own course."

Still in his interior *speculum*, the doctor could not help seeing a dim reflection of himself pronouncing the nuptial benediction on his two young friends.

CHAPTER VII.

THE VICAR AND HIS WIFE.—FAMILIES OF LOVE.—THE NEWSPAPER.

> Indulge Genio : carpamus dulcia : nostrum est
> Quod vivis : cinis, et manes, et fabula fies.
> Vive memor lethi : fugit hora : hoc quod loquor, inde est.
>
> PERSIUS.

> Indulge thy Genius, while the hour's thine own :
> Even while we speak, some part of it has flown.
> Snatch the swift-passing good : 'twill end ere long
> In dust, and shadow, and an old wife's song.

"AGAPETUS and Agapêtê,"* said the Reverend Doctor Opimian, the next morning at breakfast, "in the best sense of the words : that, I am satisfied, is the relation between this young gentleman and his handmaids."

Mrs. Opimian.—Perhaps, doctor, you will have the goodness to make your view of this relation a little more intelligible to me.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Assuredly, my dear. The word signifies "beloved," in its purest sense. And in this sense it was used by Saint Paul in reference to some of his female co-religionists and fellow-labourers in the vineyard, in whose houses he occasionally dwelt. And in this sense it was applied to virgins and holy men, who dwelt under the same roof in spiritual love.

Mrs. Opimian.—Very likely, indeed. You are a holy man, doctor, but I think, if you were a bachelor, and I were a maid, I should not trust myself to be your aga—aga—

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Agapêtê. But I never pretended to this sort of spiritualism. I followed the advice of Saint Paul, who says it is better to marry.

Mrs. Opimian.—You need not finish the quotation.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Agapêtê is often translated "adoptive sister." A very possible relation, I think, where there are vows of celibacy, and inward spiritual grace.

Mrs. Opimian.—Very possible, indeed: and equally possible where there are none.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—But more possible where there are seven adoptive sisters, than where there is only one.

* Αγαπητὸς καὶ ἀγαπηταὶ.

Mrs. Opimian.—Perhaps.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—The manners, my dear, of these damsels towards their young master, are infallible indications of the relations between them. Their respectful deference to him is a symptom in which I cannot be mistaken.

Mrs. Opimian.—I hope you are not.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I am sure I am not. I would stake all my credit for observation and experience on the purity of the seven Vestals. I am not strictly accurate in calling them so: for in Rome the number of Vestals was only six. But there were seven Pleiads, till one disappeared. We may fancy she became a seventh Vestal. Or as the planets used to be seven, and are now more than fifty, we may pass a seventh Vestal in the name of modern progress.

Mrs. Opimian.—There used to be seven deadly sins. How many has modern progress added to them?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—None, I hope, my dear. But this will be due, not to its own tendencies, but to the comprehensiveness of the old definitions.

Mrs. Opimian.—I think I have heard something like your Greek word before.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Agapêmonê, my dear. You may have heard the word Agapêmonê.

Mrs. Opimian.—That is it. And what may it signify?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—It signifies Abode of Love: spiritual love, of course.

Mrs. Opimian.—Spiritual love, which rides in carriages and four, fares sumptuously, like Dives, and protects itself with a high wall from profane observation.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Well, my dear, and there may be no harm in all that.

Mrs. Opimian.—Doctor, you are determined not to see harm in anything.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I am afraid I see more harm in many things than I like to see. But one reason for not seeing harm in this Agapêmonê matter is, that I hear so little about it. The world is ready enough to promulgate scandal; but that which is quietly right may rest in peace.

Mrs. Opimian.—Surely, doctor, you do not think this Agapêmonê right?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I only say I do not know whether *it is right* or wrong. It is nothing new. Three centuries

ago there was a Family of Love, on which Middleton wrote a comedy. Queen Elizabeth persecuted this family; Middleton made it ridiculous; but it outlived them both, and there may have been no harm in it after all.

Mrs. Opimian.—Perhaps, doctor, the world is too good to see any novelty except in something wrong.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Perhaps it is only wrong that arrests attention, because right is common, and wrong is rare. Of the many thousand persons who walk daily through a street you only hear of one who has been robbed or knocked down. If ever Hamlet's news—"that the world has grown honest"—should prove true, there would be an end of our newspaper. For, let us see, what is the epitome of a newspaper? In the first place, specimens of all the deadly sins, and infinite varieties of violence and fraud; a great quantity of talk, called by courtesy legislative wisdom, of which the result is "an incoherent and undigested mass of law, shot down, as from a rubbish-cart, on the heads of the people;"* lawyers barking at each other in that peculiar style of hylactic delivery which is called forensic eloquence, and of which the first and most distinguished practitioner was Cerberus;† bear-garden meetings of mismanaged companies, in which directors and shareholders abuse each other in choice terms, not all to be found even in Rabelais; burstings of bank bubbles, which, like a touch of harlequin's wand, strip off their masks and dominoes from "highly respectable" gentlemen, and leave them in their true figures of cheats and pickpockets; societies of all sorts, for teaching everybody everything, meddling with everybody's business, and mending everybody's morals; mountebank advertisements promising the beauty of Helen in a bottle of cosmetic, and the age of Old Parr in a box of pills; folly all alive in things called réunions; announcements that some exceedingly stupid fellow has been "entertaining" a select company; matters, however multiform, multifarious, and multitudinous, all brought into family likeness by the varnish of false pretension with which they are all overlaid.

Mrs. Opimian.—I did not like to interrupt you, doctor; but it struck me, while you were speaking, that in reading the newspaper you do not hear the bark of the lawyers.

* Jeremy Bentham.

† Cerberus forensis erat causidicus.—PETRONIUS ARBITER.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—True; but no one who has once heard the wow-wow can fail to reproduce it in imagination.

Mrs. Opimian.—You have omitted accidents, which occupy a large space in the newspaper. If the world grew ever so honest, there would still be accidents.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—But honesty would materially diminish the number. High-pressure steam boilers would not scatter death and destruction around them, if the dishonesty of avarice did not tempt their employment, where the more costly low pressure would ensure absolute safety. Honestly built houses would not come suddenly down and crush their occupants. Ships, faithfully built and efficiently manned, would not so readily strike on a lee shore, nor go instantly to pieces on the first touch of the ground. Honestly made sweetmeats would not poison children; honestly compounded drugs would not poison patients. In short, the larger portion of what we call accidents are crimes.

Mrs. Opimian.—I have often heard you say, of railways and steam vessels, that the primary cause of their disasters is the insane passion of the public for speed. That is not crime, but folly.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—It is crime in those who ought to know better than to act in furtherance of the folly. But when the world has grown honest, it will no doubt grow wise. When we have got rid of crime, we may consider how to get rid of folly. So that question is adjourned to the Greek kalends.

Mrs. Opimian.—There are always in a newspaper some things of a creditable character.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—When we are at war, naval and military heroism abundantly; but in time of peace, these virtues sleep. They are laid up like ships in ordinary. No doubt, of the recorded facts of civil life some are good, and more are indifferent, neither good nor bad; but good and indifferent together are scarcely more than a twelfth part of the whole. Still, the matters thus presented are all exceptional cases. A hermit reading nothing but a newspaper might find little else than food for misanthropy; but living among friends, and in the bosom of our family, we see the dark side of life in the occasional picture, the bright is its every-day aspect. The occasional is the matter of curiosity, of incident, of adventure, of *things* that really happen to few, and may possibly happen to

any. The interest attendant on any action or event is in just proportion to its rarity; and, happily, quiet virtues are all around us, and obtrusive virtues seldom cross our path. On the whole, I agree in opinion with Theseus,* that there is more good than evil in the world.

Mrs. Opimian.—I think, doctor, you would not maintain any opinion if you had not an authority two thousand years old for it.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Well, my dear, I think most opinions worth maintaining have an authority of about that age.

CHAPTER VIII.

PANTOPRAGMATICS.

Ψῦξον τὸν οἶνον, Δῶρι. ———
———Ἔγχεον σὺ δὴ πυΐν·
Εὐζωρότερόν γε νὴ Δί', ὦ παῖ, ὅ'ς· τὸ γὰρ
Ὕδατος ἅπαν τοῦτ' ἐστὶ τῇ ψυχῇ κακόν.

Cool the wine, Doris. Pour it in the cup,
Simple, unmixed with water. Such dilution
Serves only to wash out the spirit of man.

THE doctor, under the attraction of his new acquaintance, had allowed more time than usual to elapse between his visits to Gryll Grange, and when he resumed them, he was not long without communicating the metamorphosis of the Old Tower, and the singularities of its inhabitants. They dined well as usual, and drank their wine cool.

Miss Gryll.—There are many things in what you have told us that excite my curiosity; but first, what do you suppose is the young gentleman's religion?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—From the great liking he seems to have taken to me, I should think he was of the Church of England, if I did not rather explain it by our Greek sympathy. At the same time, he kept very carefully in view that Saint Catharine is a saint of the English Church Calendar. I imagine there is less of true piety than of an abstract notion of ideal beauty, even in his devotion to her. But it is so far satisfactory that he wished to prove his reli-

* Eurip. *Suppl.* 207: Herm.

gion, such as it is, to be within the pale of the Church of England.

Miss Gryll.—I like the idea of his closing the day with a hymn, sung in concert by his seven Vestals.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I am glad that you think charitably of the damsels. It is not every lady that would. But I am satisfied they deserve it.

Mr. Gryll.—I should like to know the young gentleman. I wish you could manage to bring him here. Should not you like to see him, Morgana?

Miss Gryll.—Yes, uncle.

Mr. Gryll.—Try what you can do, doctor. We shall have before long some poetical and philosophical visitors. That may tempt him to join us.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—It may; but I am not confident. He seems to me to be indisposed to general society, and to care for nothing but woods, rivers, and the sea; Greek poetry, Saint Catharine, and the seven Vestals. However, I will try what can be done.

Mr. Gryll.—But, doctor, I think he would scarcely have provided such a spacious dining-room, and so much domestic accommodation, if he had intended to shut himself up from society altogether. I expect that some day when you go there you will find a large party. Try if he will co-operate in the Aristophanic comedy.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—A good idea. That may be something to his mind.

Miss Gryll.—Talking of comedy, doctor, what has become of Lord Curryfin, and his lecture on fish?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Why, Lord Michin Malicho,* Lord Facing-both-ways, and two or three other arch-quacks, have taken to merry-andrewizing in a new arena, which they call the Science of Pantopragmatics, and they have bitten Lord Curryfin into tumbling with them; but the mania will subside when the weather grows cool; and no doubt we shall still have him at Thornback Bay, teaching the fishermen how to know a herring from a halibut.

Miss Gryll.—But pray, doctor, what is this new science?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Why that, Miss Gryll, I cannot well make out. I have asked several professors of the science, and have got nothing in return but some fine varieties

* "Marry, this is *miching mallecho*: it means mischief."—*Hamlet.*

of rigmarole, of which I can make neither head nor tale. It seems to be a real art of talking about an imaginary art of teaching every man his own business. Nothing practical comes of it, and indeed so much the better. It will be at least harmless, as long as it is like Hamlet's reading, "words, words, words." Like most other science, it resolves itself into lecturing, lecturing, lecturing, about all sorts of matters, relevant and irrelevant: one enormous bore prating about jurisprudence, another about statistics, another about education, and so forth; the *crambe repetita* of the same rubbish, which has already been served up "twiës hot and twiës cold,"* at as many other associations nick-named scientific.

Miss Gryll.—Then, doctor, I should think Lord Curryfin's lecture would be a great relief to the unfortunate audience.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—No doubt more amusing, and equally profitable. Not a fish more would be caught for it, and this will typify the result of all such scientific talk. I had rather hear a practical cook lecture on bubble and squeak: no bad emblem of the whole affair.

Mr. Gryll.—It has been said a man of genius can discourse on anything. Bubble and squeak seems a limited subject; but in the days of the French Revolution there was an amusing poem with that title;† and there might be an amusing lecture; especially if it were like the poem, discursive and emblematical. But men so dismally far gone in the affectation of earnestness would scarcely relish it.

* And many a Jacke of Dover hast thou sold,
That hath been twiës hot and twiës cold.
CHAUCER: *The Coke's Prologue.*

† "Bubble and Squeak: a Gallimaufry of British Beef with the Chopped Cabbage of Gallic Philosophy." By HUDDLESTON.

CHAPTER IX.

SAINT CATHARINE.

——————gli occhi su levai,
E vidi lei che si facea corona,
Riflettendo da sè gli eterni rai.
DANTE: *Paradiso*, xxxi. 70—72.

I lifted up my gaze,
And looked on her who made herself a crown,
Reflecting from herself the eternal rays.

IT was not long before the doctor again walked over to the Tower, to propose to his young friend to co-operate in the Aristophanic comedy.

He found him well disposed to do so, and they passed a portion of the afternoon in arranging their programme.

They dined, and passed the evening much as before. The next morning, as they were ascending to the library to resume their pleasant labour, the doctor said to himself, "I have passed along galleries wherein were many chambers, and the doors in the day were more commonly open than shut, yet this chamber door of my young friend is always shut. There must be a mystery in it." And the doctor, not generally given to morbid curiosity, found himself very curious about this very simple matter.

At last he mustered up courage to say, "I have seen your library, dining-room, and drawing-room; but you have so much taste in internal arrangements, I should like to see the rest of the house."

Mr. Falconer.—There is not much more to see. You have occupied one of the best bedrooms. The rest do not materially differ.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—To say the truth, I should like to see your own.

Mr. Falconer.—I am quite willing. But I have thought, perhaps erroneously, it is decorated in a manner you might not altogether approve.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Nothing indecorous, I hope.

Mr. Falconer.—Quite the contrary. You may, perhaps, think it too much devoted to my peculiar views of the purity of ideal beauty, as developed in Saint Catharine.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—You have not much to apprehend on that score.

Mr. Falconer.—You see, there is an altar, with an image of Saint Catharine, and the panels of the room are painted with subjects from her life, mostly copied from Italian masters. The pictures of St. Catharine and her legend very early impressed her on my mind as the type of ideal beauty—of all that can charm, irradiate, refine, exalt, in the best of the better sex.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—You are enthusiastic; but indeed, though she is retained as a saint in the Reformed Church, I am not very familiar with her history. And to me some of these pictures require explanation.

Mr. Falconer.—I will tell you her legend as briefly as I may. And we will pass from picture to picture as the subjects arise.

THE LEGEND OF SAINT CATHARINE.

Catharine was a Princess of Alexandria in the third century. She embraced the Christian religion by divine inspiration. She was pre-eminent in beauty, learning, and discourse. She converted her father and mother, and all with whom she came into communication. The Emperor Maxentius brought together the fifty wisest men of the empire to convert her from the error of her way, and she converted them all to the new faith. Maxentius burned her proselytes, and threatened her with a similar death. She remained firm. He had her publicly scourged, and cast her into prison to perish by famine. Going on an expedition, he left the execution of his orders to the empress and his chief general, Porphyrius. Angels healed her wounds and supplied her with food; and in a beatific vision the Saviour of the world placed a ring on her finger, and called her his bride.* The presence of the ring showed to her the truth of the visitation. The empress and Porphyrius visited the prison, and she converted them also. The emperor, returning, put the empress and Porphyrius to death; and after many ineffectual expostula-

* Maria, Vergine delle Vergini, e Misericordia delle Misericordie, vestita de i lampi del Sole, e coronata de i raggi delle Stelle, prese il sottile, il delicato, ed il sacro dito di Catarina, humile di core e mansueta di vita, ed il largo, il clemente, ed il pietoso figliuol suo lo cinse con lo anello.—*Vita di Santa Catarina*, l. ii. Vinezia, 1541.

tions with Catharine, determined on putting her to death by the wheel which bears her name. Four of these wheels, armed with iron teeth, and revolving towards each other, were to cut her to pieces. Angels broke the wheels. He then brought her to the stake, and the angels extinguished the flames. He then ordered her to be beheaded by the sword. This was permitted, and in the meantime the day had closed. The body, reserved for exposure to wild beasts, was left under guard at the place of execution. Intense darkness fell on the night, and in the morning the body had disappeared. The angels had borne it to the summit of the loftiest mountain of the Horeb range, where still a rock, bearing the form of a natural sarcophagus, meets the eye of the traveller. Here it was watched by angel-guards, and preserved in unchanging beauty, till, in the fulness of time, it was revealed to a holy man, who removed it to the shrine, under which it lies to this day, with the ring still on its hand, in the convent which was then founded, and which bears her name—the convent of Saint Catharine of Mount Sinai.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Most of this is new to me. Yet I am not unfamiliar with pictures of the marriage of Saint Catharine, which was a favourite subject with the great Italian masters. But here is a picture which the legend, as you have related it, does not illustrate. What is this tomb, with flames bursting from it, and monks and others recoiling in dismay?

Mr. Falconer.—It represents a remarkable incident at the tomb of the saint. The Empress Catharine II. was a great benefactress to the Convent of Mount Sinai, and desired to possess Saint Catharine's ring. She sent a mitred abbot as an envoy to request it from the brotherhood. The monks, unwilling to displease the empress, replied that they did not dare to remove it themselves, but that they would open the tomb, and the envoy might take it. They opened the tomb accordingly, and the envoy looked on the hand and the ring. He approached to draw it off; but flames burst forth: he recoiled, and the tomb closed. Under such a manifestation of the saint's displeasure, the fathers could not again attempt to open it.*

* *Illustrations of Jerusalem and Mount Sinai* (1837), p. 27.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I should like to have seen the empress receiving the envoy's report.

Mr. Falconer.—Her reception of it would depend on the degree of faith which she either actually felt, or might have thought it politic to assume. At any rate, the fathers had shown their devotion, and afforded her a good opportunity for exhibiting hers. She did not again seek to obtain the ring.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Now, what are these three pictures in one frame, of chapels on hills?

Mr. Falconer.—These chapels are here represented as they may be supposed to have been in the Catholic days of England. Three sisters, named Catharine, Martha, and Anne, built them to their namesake saints, on the summits of three hills, which took from these dedications the names they still bear. From the summit of each of these chapels the other two were visible. The sisters thought the chapels would long remain memorials of Catholic piety and sisterly love. The Reformation laid them in ruins. Nothing remains of the chapel of Saint Anne but a few gray stones, built into an earthen wall, which, some half century ago, enclosed a plantation. The hill is now better known by the memory of Charles Fox, than by that of its ancient saint. The chapel of Saint Martha has been restored and applied to Protestant worship. The chapel of Saint Catharine remains a picturesque ruin, on the banks of the Wey near Guildford.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—And that old church?

Mr. Falconer.—That was the church of Saint Catharine, which was pulled down to make way for the dock by which her name is now profaned; an act of desecration which has been followed by others, and will be followed by many more, whenever it may suit the interests of commerce to commit sacrilege on consecrated ground and dissipate the ashes of the dead; an act which, even when that of a barbarian invader, Horace thought it would be profanation even to look on.* Whatever may be in other respects the superiority of modern piety, we are far inferior to the ancients in reverence for temples and tombs.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I am afraid I cannot gainsay that observation. But what is that stained glass window?

* *Epod.* 16, 13.

Mr. Falconer.—It is copied on a smaller scale, and with more of Italian artistic beauty in the principal figure, from the window in West Wickham church. She is trampling on the Emperor Maxentius. You see all her emblems: the palm, which belongs to all sainted martyrs; the crown, the wheel, the fire, the sword, which belong especially to her; and the book, with which she is always represented, as herself a miracle of learning, and its chosen universal patroness in the schools of the Middle Ages.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Unquestionably the legend is interesting. At present, your faith is simply poetical. But take care, my young friend, that you do not finish by becoming the dupe of your own mystification.

Mr. Falconer.—I have no fear of that. I think I can clearly distinguish devotion to ideal beauty from superstitious belief. I feel the necessity of some such devotion, to fill up the void which the world, as it is, leaves in my mind. I wish to believe in the presence of some local spiritual influence; genius or nymph; linking us by a medium of something like human feeling, but more pure and more exalted, to the all-pervading, creative, and preservative spirit of the universe; but I cannot realize it from things as they are. Everything is too deeply tinged with sordid vulgarity. There can be no intellectual power resident in a wood, where the only inscription is not "*Genio loci*," but "Trespassers will be prosecuted;" no Naiad in a stream that turns a cotton-mill; no Oread in a mountain dell, where a railway train deposits a cargo of Vandals; no Nereids or Oceanitides along the sea-shore, where a coast-guard is watching for smugglers. No; the intellectual life of the material world is dead. Imagination cannot replace it. But the intercession of saints still forms a link between the visible and invisible. In their symbols I can imagine their presence. Each in the recess of our own thought we may preserve their symbols from the intrusion of the world. And the saint, whom I have chosen, presents to my mind the most perfect ideality of physical, moral, and intellectual beauty.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I cannot object to your taste. But I hope you will not be led into investing the ideality with too much of the semblance of reality. I should be sorry to find you far gone in hagiolatry. I hope you will acquiesce in Martin, keeping equally clear of Peter and Jack.

Mr. Falconer.—Nothing will more effectually induce me so to acquiesce, than your company, dear doctor. A tolerant liberality like yours has a very persuasive influence.

From this digression, the two friends proceeded to the arrangement of their Aristophanic comedy, and divided their respective shares after the manner of Beaumont and Fletcher.

CHAPTER X.

THE THUNDERSTORM.

Si bene calculum ponas, ubique naufragium est.
PETRONIUS ARBITER.

If you consider well the events of life, shipwreck is everywhere.

AFTER luncheon the doctor thought of returning home, when a rumbling of distant thunder made him pause, They reascended the Tower, to reconnoitre the elements from the library. The windows were so arranged as to afford a panoramic view.

The thunder muttered far off, but there was neither rain nor visible lightning.

"The storm is at a great distance," said the doctor, "and it seems to be passing away on the verge of the sky."

But on the opposite horizon appeared a mass of dark-blue cloud, which rose rapidly, and advanced in the direct line of the Tower. Before it rolled a lighter but still lurid volume of vapour, which curled and wreathed like eddying smoke before the denser blackness of the unbroken cloud.

Simultaneously followed the flashing of lightning, the rolling of thunder, and a deluge of rain like the bursting of a waterspout.

They sate some time in silence, watching the storm as it swept along, with wind, and driving rain, and whirling hail, bringing for a time almost the darkness of night, through which the forked lightning poured a scarcely interrupted blaze.

Suddenly came a long dazzling flash, that seemed to irradiate the entire circumference of the sky, followed instantaneously by one of those crashing peals of thunder, which

always indicate that something very near has been struck by the lightning.

The doctor turned round to make a remark on the awful grandeur of the effect, when he observed that his young friend had disappeared. On his return, he said he had been looking for what had been struck.

"And what was it?" said the doctor.

"Nothing in the house," said his host.

"The Vestals," thought the doctor; "these were all his solicitude."

But though Mr. Falconer had looked no further than to the safety of the seven sisters, his attention was soon drawn to a tumult below, which seemed to indicate that some serious mischief had resulted from the lightning; and the youngest of the sisters, appearing in great trepidation, informed him that one of two horses in a gentleman's carriage had been struck dead, and that a young lady in the carriage had been stunned by the passing flash, though how far she was injured by it could not be immediately known. The other horse, it appeared, had been prancing in terror, and had nearly overthrown the carriage; but he had been restrained by the vigorous arm of a young farmer, who had subsequently carried the young lady into the house, where she was now resting on a couch in the female apartments, and carefully attended by the sisters.

Mr. Falconer and the doctor descended into the hall, and were assured that the young lady was doing well, but that she would be much the better for being left some time longer undisturbed. An elderly gentleman issued from the female apartments, and the doctor with some amazement recognized his friend Mr. Gryll, to whom and his niece this disaster had occurred.

The beauty of the morning had tempted them to a long drive; and they thought it would be a good opportunity to gratify at least a portion of the curiosity which the doctor's description of the Folly and its inhabitants had excited in them. They had therefore determined on taking a circuit, in which they would pass under the walls of the Tower. They were almost at the extremity of their longest radius, when the storm burst over them, and were just under the Tower when the lightning struck one of their horses. Harry Hedgerow was on his way with some farm produce

when the accident occurred, and was the young farmer who had subdued the surviving horse and carried the young lady into the house. Mr. Gryll was very panegyrical of this young man's behaviour, and the doctor when he recognized him shook him heartily by the hand, and told him he felt sure that he was a lad who would make his way: a remark which Harry received as a good omen: for Dorothy heard it, and looked at him with a concurrent, though silent, approbation.

The drawing-room and the chambers for visitors were between the Tower and the *gynæceum*, or female apartments, which were as completely separated from the rest of the house as they could have been in Athens.

After some anxious inquiries, it was reported that the young lady was sleeping, and that one or other of the sisters would keep constant watch by her. It was therefore arranged that Mr. Gryll should dine and pass the night where he was. Before dinner he had the satisfaction of hearing from medical authority that all would be well after a little time.

Harry Hedgerow had bethought him of a retired physician, who lived with a maiden sister in a cottage at no great distance from the Tower, and who often gave gratuitous advice to his poorer neighbours. If he prescribed anything beyond their means, himself or his sister was always ready to supply it. Though their own means were limited, they were the good angels of a small circumference.

The old physician confirmed the opinion already given by the sisters, that the young lady for the present only required repose: but he accepted the invitation to remain till the morning, in the event of his advice being needed.

So Miss Gryll remained with the elder sisters. Mr. Gryll and the two doctors, spiritual and temporal, sat down to dinner with Mr. Falconer, and were waited on, as usual, by the younger handmaids.

CHAPTER XI.

ELECTRICAL SCIENCE.—THE DEATH OF PHILEMON.

Οἴνου μὴ παρεόντος, ἀτερπέα δεῖπνα τραπέζης·
Οἴνου μὴ παρεόντος, ἀθελγέες εἰσὶ χορεῖαι.
Ἀνὴρ πένθος ἔχων, ὅτε γεύσεται ἡδέος οἴνου,
Στυγνὸν ἀεξομένης ἀποσείσεται ὄγκον ἀνίης.

Where wine is not, no mirth the banquet knows:
Where wine is not, the dance all joyless goes.
The man, oppressed with cares, who tastes the bowl,
Shall shake the weight of sorrow from his soul.

BACCHUS, on the birth of the vine, predicting its benefits: in the twelfth book of the *Dionysiaca* of NONNUS.

THE conversation at dinner turned on the occurrences of the morning and the phenomena of electricity. The physician, who had been a traveller, related many anecdotes from his own observation; especially such as tended to show by similarity that the injury to Miss Gryll would not be of long duration. He had known, in similar cases, instances of apparent total paralysis; but he had always found it temporary. Perhaps in a day or two, but at most in a very few days, it would certainly pass away. In the meantime he recommended absolute repose. Mr. Falconer entreated Mr. Gryll to consider the house as his own. Matters were arranged accordingly; and it was determined that the next morning a messenger should be despatched to Gryll Grange for a supply of apparel. The Rev. Dr. Opimian, who was as fond as the Squire himself of the young lady, had been grievously discomposed by the accident of the morning, and felt that he should not thoroughly recover his serenity till he could again see her in her proper character, the light and life of her society. He quoted Homer, Æschylus, Aristotle, Plutarch, Athenæus, Horace, Persius, and Pliny, to show that all which is practically worth knowing on the subject of electricity had been known to the ancients. The electric telegraph he held to be a nuisance, as disarranging chronology, and giving only the heads of a chapter, of which the details lost their interest before they arrived, the heads of another chapter having intervened to destroy it. Then, what

an amount of misery it inflicted, when, merely saying that there had been a great battle, and that thousands had been wounded or killed, it maintained an agony of suspense in all who had friends on the field, till the ordinary channels of intelligence brought the names of the sufferers. No Sicilian tyrant had invented such an engine of cruelty. This declamation against a supposed triumph of modern science, which was listened to with some surprise by the physician, and with great respect by his other auditors, having somewhat soothed his troubled spirit, in conjunction with the physician's assurance, he propitiated his Genius by copious libations of claret, pronouncing high panegyrics on the specimen before him, and interspersing quotations in praise of wine as the one great panacea for the cares of this world.

A week passed away, and the convalescent had made good progress. Mr. Falconer had not yet seen his fair guest. Six of the sisters, one remaining with Miss Gryll, performed every evening, at the earnest request of Mr. Gryll, a great variety of music, but always ending with the hymn to their master's saint. The old physician came once or twice, and stayed the night. The Reverend Doctor Opimian went home for his Sunday duties, but took too much interest in the fair Morgana not to return as soon as he could to the Tower. Arriving one morning in the first division of the day, and ascending to the library, he found his young friend writing. He asked him if he were working on the Aristophanic comedy? Mr. Falconer said, he got on best with that in the doctor's company. "But I have been writing," he said, "on something connected with the Athenian drama. I have been writing a ballad on the death of Philemon, as told by Suidas and Apuleius." The doctor expressed a wish to hear it, and Mr. Falconer read it to him.

THE DEATH OF PHILEMON.*

I.

Closed was Philemon's hundredth year:
The theatre was thronged to hear
His last completed play:
In the mid scene, a sudden rain
Dispersed the crowd—to meet again
On the succeeding day.

* SUIDAS: *sub voce* Φιλήμων. APULEIUS: *Florid.* 16.

He sought his home, and slept, and dreamed.
Nine maidens through his door, it seemed,
Passed to the public street.
He asked them, "Why they left his home?"
They said, "A guest will hither come,
We must not stay to meet."

He called his boy with morning light,
Told him the vision of the night,
And bade his play be brought.
His finished page again he scanned,
Resting his head upon his hand,
Absorbed in studious thought.

He knew not what the dream foreshowed:
That nought divine may hold abode
Where death's dark shade is felt:
And therefore were the Muses nine
Leaving the old poetic shrine,
Where they so long had dwelt.

II.

The theatre was thronged once more,
More thickly than the day before,
To hear the half-heard song.
The day wore on. Impatience came.
They called upon Philemon's name,
With murmurs loud and long.

Some sought at length his studious cell,
And to the stage returned, to tell
What thousands strove to ask.
"The poet we have been to seek
Sate with his hand upon his cheek,
As pondering o'er his task.

"We spoke. He made us no reply.
We reverentially drew nigh,
And twice our errand told.
He answered not. We drew more near:
The awful mystery then was clear:
We found him stiff and cold.

"Struck by so fair a death, we stood
Awhile in sad admiring mood:
Then hastened back, to say
That he, the praised and loved of all,
Is deaf for ever to your call:
That on this self-same day,

"When here presented should have been
The close of his fictitious scene,
His life's true scene was o'er:

We seemed, in solemn silence awed,
To hear the 'Farewell and applaud,'
Which he may speak no more.

"Of tears the rain gave prophecy:
The nuptial dance of comedy
Yields to the funeral train.
Assemble where his pyre must burn:
Honour his ashes in their urn:
And on another day return
To hear his songs again."

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—A beautiful fiction.

Mr. Falconer.—If it be a fiction. The supernatural is confined to the dream. All the rest is probable; and I am willing to think it true, dream and all.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—You are determined to connect the immaterial with the material world, as far as you can.

Mr. Falconer.—I like the immaterial world. I like to live among thoughts and images of the past and the possible, and even of the impossible, now and then.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Certainly, there is much in the material world to displease sensitive and imaginative minds; but I do not know any one who has less cause to complain of it than you have. You are surrounded with all possible comforts, and with all the elements of beauty, and of intellectual enjoyment.

Mr. Falconer.—It is not my own world that I complain of. It is the world on which I look "from the loop-holes of retreat." I cannot sit here, like one of the Gods of Epicurus, who, as Cicero says, was satisfied with thinking, through all eternity, "how comfortable he was."* I look with feelings of intense pain on the mass of poverty and crime; of unhealthy, unavailing, unremunerated toil, blighting childhood in its blossom, and womanhood in its prime; of "all the oppressions that are done under the sun."

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I feel with you on all these points; but there is much good in the world; more good than evil, I have always maintained.

They would have gone off in a discussion on this point, but the French clock warned them to luncheon.

* Comprehende igitur animo, et propone ante oculos, deum nihil aliud in omni æternitate, nisi, Mihi pulchre est, et, Ego beatus sum, cogitantem.—CICERO: *De Naturâ Deorum*, l. i. c. 41.

In the evening the young lad
to join the little party in the draw
as before, of Mr. Falconer, Mr. Gr
the Reverend Doctor Opimian. M
to Mr. Falconer. She was full of g
kind attention of the sisters, and
to hear their music. The wish w
She heard them with great pleasu
equal to much exertion, she could n
in with them in their hymn to Sain

She accompanied them when they

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I presum
genuine old monastic verses: they h

Mr. Falconer.—They are so, and t
music.

Dr. Anodyne.—There is somethi
solemn and impressive. In an age l
and pictures are the predominant
that the forms of the old Catholic
increasing favour. There is a sor
religion, which results less from
feeling of poetry; it finds its disci
growth; and has very essential dif
wardly resembles.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian—It is, a
occasion to remark, and as my youn
admit, one of the many forms of
which, without being in itself reli
ginations an influence that is very

Mr. Falconer.—An orthodox Eng
poet who sang to the Virgin:

> Thy image falls to earth. Yet
> Not unforgiven the suppliant k
> As to a visible Power, in which
> All that was mixed and reconc
> Of mother's love with maiden
> Of high with low, celestial wit

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Well, n
of ideal beauty has exercised mor
on you, whatever degree of orth
view of it.

The little party separated for th

*WORDSWORTH: *Eccles*

CHAPTER XII.

THE FOREST DELL.—THE POWER OF LOVE.—THE LOTTERY OF MARRIAGE.

Τί δεῖ γὰρ ὄντα θνητόν, ἱκετεύω, ποιεῖν,
Πλὴν ἡδέως ζῆν τὸν βίον καθ' ἡμέραν,
Ἐὰν ἔχῃ τις ὁπόθεν . . . .
Εἰς αὔριον δὲ μηδὲ φροντίζειν ὅ τι
Ἔσται . . PHILETAERUS: *Cynagis.*

I pray you, what can mortal man do better
Than live his daily life as pleasantly
As daily means avail him? Life's frail tenure
Warns not to trust to-morrow.

THE next day Mr. Falconer was perfectly certain that Miss Gryll was not yet well enough to be removed. No one was anxious to refute the proposition; they were all so well satisfied with the place and the company they were in, that they felt, the young lady included, a decided unwillingness to go. That day Miss Gryll came to dinner, and the next day she came to breakfast, and in the evening she joined in the music, and in short she was once more altogether herself; but Mr. Falconer continued to insist that the journey home would be too much for her. When this excuse failed, he still entreated his new friends to remain; and so passed several days. At length Mr. Gryll found he must resolve on departing, especially as the time had arrived when he expected some visitors. He urgently invited Mr. Falconer to visit him in return. The invitation was cordially accepted, and in the meantime considerable progress had been made in the Aristophanic comedy.

Mr. Falconer, after the departure of his visitors, went up into his library. He took down one book after another, but they did not fix his attention as they had used to do; he turned over the leaves of Homer, and read some passages about Circe; then took down Bojardo, and read of Morgana and Falerina and Dragontina; then took down Tasso and read of Armida. He would not look at Ariosto's Alcina, because her change into an old woman destroyed all the charm of the previous picture. He dwelt on the enchantresses, who remained in unaltered beauty. But even this he did

only by fits and starts, and found himself continually wandering away towards a more enchanting reality.

He descended to his bedroom, and meditated on ideal beauty in the portraits of Saint Catharine. But he could not help thinking that the ideal might be real, at least in one instance, and he wandered down into his drawing-room. There he sat absorbed in thought, till his two young handmaids appeared with his luncheon. He smiled when he saw them, and sat down to the table as if nothing had disturbed him. Then, taking his stick and his dog he walked out into the forest.

There was within moderate distance a deep dell, in the bottom of which ran a rivulet, very small in dry weather, but in heavy rains becoming a torrent, which had worn itself a high-banked channel, winding in fantastic curves from side to side of its narrow boundaries. Above this channel old forest trees rose to a great height on both sides of the dell. The slope every here and there was broken by promontories which during centuries the fall of the softer portions of the soil had formed; and on these promontories were natural platforms, covered, as they were more or less accessible to the sun, with grass and moss and fern and foxglove, and every variety of forest vegetation. These platforms were favourite resorts of deer, which imparted to the wild scene its own peculiar life.

This was a scene in which, but for the deeper and deeper wear of the floods and the bolder falls of the promontories, time had made little change. The eyes of the twelfth century had seen it much as it appeared to those of the nineteenth. The ghosts of departed ages might seem to pass through it in succession, with all their changes of faith and purpose and manners and costume. To a man who loved to dwell in the past, there could not be a more congenial scene. One old oak stood in the centre of one of the green platforms, and a portion of its gnarled roots presented a convenient seat. Mr. Falconer had frequently passed a day here when alone. The deer had become too accustomed to him to fly at his approach, and the dog had been too well disciplined to molest them. There he had sat for hours at a time, reading his favourite poets. There was no great poet with some of whose scenes this scenery did not harmonize. The deep woods that surrounded the dwelling of Circe, the obscure

sylvan valley in which Dante met Virgil, the forest depths through which Angelica fled, the enchanted wood in which Rinaldo met the semblance of Armida, the forest-brook by which Jaques moralized over the wounded deer, were all reproduced in this single spot, and fancy peopled it at pleasure with nymphs and genii, fauns and satyrs, knights and ladies, friars, foresters, hunters, and huntress maids, till the whole diurnal world seemed to pass away like a vision. There, for him, Matilda had gathered flowers on the opposite bank;* Laura had risen from one of the little pools—resting-places of the stream—to seat herself in the shade;† Rosalind and Maid Marian had peeped forth from their alleys green; all different in form, in feature, and in apparel; but now they were all one; each, as she rose in imagination, presented herself under the aspect of the newly-known Morgana.

Finding his old imaginations thus disturbed, he arose and walked home. He dined alone, drank a bottle of Madeira, as if it had been so much water, summoned the seven sisters to the drawing-room earlier, and detained them later than usual, till their music and its old associations had restored him to something like tranquillity. He had always placed the *summum bonum* of life in tranquillity, and not in excitement. He felt that his path was now crossed by a disturbing force, and determined to use his utmost exertions to avoid exposing himself again to its influence.

In this mood the Reverend Doctor Opimian found him one morning in the library, reading. He sprang up to meet the Divine, exclaiming, "Ah, dear doctor, I am very glad to see you. Have you any especial favourite among the Odes of Pindar?"

The doctor thought this an odd question for the first salutation. He had expected that the first inquiry would have been for the fair convalescent. He divined that the evasion of this subject was the result of an inward struggle. He thought it would be best to fall in with the mood of the questioner, and said, "Charles Fox's favourite is said to

* DANTE: *Purgatario*, c. 28.

† Or in forma di Ninfa o d'altra Diva,
Che del più chiaro fondo di Sorga esca,
E pongasi a seder in sulla riva,
PETRARCA: *Sonetto* 240.

have been the second Olympic; I am not sure that there is, or can be, anything better. What say you?"

Mr. Falconer.—It may be that something in it touches a peculiar tone of feeling; but to me there is nothing like the ninth Pythian.

The Rev. Dr. Opimiam.—I can understand your fancy for that ode. You see an image of ideal beauty in the nymph Cyrene.

Mr. Falconer.—"Hidden are the keys of wise persuasion of sacred endearments,"* seems a strange phrase in English; but in Greek the words invest a charming sentiment with singular grace. Fit words to words as closely as we may, the difference of the mind which utters them fails to reproduce the true semblance of the thought. The difference of the effect produced, as in this instance, by exactly corresponding words, can only be traced to the essential difference of the Greek and the English mind.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—And indeed, as with the words so with the image. We are charmed by Cyrene wrestling with the lion; but we should scarcely choose an English girl so doing as the type of ideal beauty.

Mr. Falconer.—We must draw the image of Cyrene, not from an English girl, but from a Greek statue.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Unless a man is in love, and then to him all images of beauty take something of the form and features of his mistress.

Mr. Falconer.—That is to say, a man in love sees everything through a false medium. It must be a dreadful calamity to be in love.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Surely not, when all goes well with it.

Mr. Falconer.—To me it would be the worst of all mischances.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Every man must be subject to Love once in his life. It is useless to contend with him. "Love," says Sophocles, "is unconquered in battle, and keeps his watch in the soft cheeks of beauty."†

* Κρυπταὶ κλαῖδες ἐντι σοφᾶς Πειθοῦς ἱερᾶν φιλοτάτων.—PINDAR? It has been suggested by a scholarly friend that a better translation of this passage would be, "Secret are wise Persuasion's keys to the sacred joys of love." Sacred because presided over by Eros and Aphrodite.—E. N.

† Ἔρως ἀνίκατε μαχαν, κ.τ.λ.—*Antigone.*

Mr. Falconer.—I am afraid, doctor, the Morgana to whom you have introduced me is a veritable enchantress. You find me here, determined to avoid the spell.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Pardon me. You were introduced, as Jupiter was to Semele, by thunder and lightning, which was, happily, not quite as fatal.

Mr. Falconer.—I must guard against its being as fatal in a different sense; otherwise I may be myself the *triste bidental.** I have aimed at living, like an ancient Epicurean, a life of tranquillity. I had thought myself armed with triple brass against the folds of a three-formed Chimæra. What with classical studies, and rural walks, and a domestic society peculiarly my own, I led what I considered the perfection of life: "days so like each other they could not be remembered."†

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—It is vain to make schemes of life. The world will have its slaves, and so will Love.

> Say, if you can, in what you cannot change,
> For such the mind of man, as is the day
> The Sire of Gods and men brings over him.‡

Mr. Falconer.—I presume, doctor, from the complacency with which you speak of Love, you have had no cause to complain of him.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Quite the contrary. I have been an exception to the rule, that "The course of true love never did run smooth." Nothing could run more smooth than mine. I was in love. I proposed. I was accepted. No crossings before. No bickerings after. I drew a prize in the lottery of marriage.

Mr. Falconer.—It strikes me, doctor, that the lady may say as much.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I have made it my study to give her cause to say so. And I have found my reward.

Mr. Falconer.—Still, yours is an exceptional case. For, as

* *Bidental* is usually a place struck by lightning: thence enclosed, and the soil forbidden to be moved. Persius uses it for a person so killed.

† WORDSWORTH: *The Brothers.*

‡ Quid placet aut odio est, quod non mutabile credas?
Τοῖος γαρ νόος ἐστὶν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων,
Οἷον ἐπ' ἦμαρ ἄγῃσι πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε.
These two quotations form the motto of KNIGHT'S *Principles of Taste.*

far as my reading and limited observation have shown me, there are few happy marriages. It has been said by an old comic poet that "a man who brings a wife into his house, brings into it with her either a good or an evil genius.* And I may add from Juvenal: "The Gods only know which it will be."†

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Well, the time advances for the rehearsals of our Aristophanic comedy, and, independently of your promise to visit the Grange, and their earnest desire to see you, you ought to be there to assist in the preliminary arrangements.

Mr. Falconer.—Before you came, I had determined not to go; for to tell you the truth, I am afraid of falling in love.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—It is not such a fearful matter. Many have been the better for it. Many have been cured of it. It is one of those disorders which every one must have once.

Mr. Falconer.—The later the better.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—No; the later the worse, if it falls into a season when it cannot be reciprocated.

Mr. Falconer.—That is just the season for it. If I were sure that it would not be reciprocated, I think I should be content to have gone through it.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Do you think it would be reciprocated?

Mr. Falconer.—Oh! no. I only think it possible that it might be.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Well, there is a gentleman doing his best to bring about your wish.

Mr. Falconer.—Indeed! who?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—A visitor at the Grange, who seems in great favour with both uncle and niece—Lord Curryfin.

Mr. Falconer.—Lord Curryfin! I never heard you speak of him, but as a person to be laughed at.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—That was my impression of him before I knew him. Barring his absurdities, in the way of

* "Οταν γὰρ ἄλοχον εἰς δόμους ἀγῃ πόσις,
Οὐχ ὡς δοκεῖ γυναῖκα λαμβάνει μόνον,
Ὁμοῦ δὲ τῇδ' ἐπεισκομίζεται λαβὼν
Καὶ δαίμον' ἤτοι χρηστὸν ἢ τοὐναντίον.
THEODECTES: *apud Stobaeum.*

† Conjugium petimus partumque uxoris, at illis
Notum, qui pueri, qualisque futura sit uxor.
JUV. *Sat.* x. 352-3.

lecturing on fish, and of shining in absurd company in the science of pantopragmatics, he has very much to recommend him: and I discover in him one quality which is invaluable. He does all he can to make himself agreeable to all about him, and he has great tact in seeing how to do it. In any intimate relation of life—with a reasonable wife, for instance, he would be the pink of a good husband.

The Doctor was playing, not altogether unconsciously, the part of an innocent Iago. He said only what was true, and he said it with a good purpose; for, with all his repeated resolutions against match-making, he could not dismiss from his mind the wish to see his young friends come together; and he would not have liked to see Lord Curryfin carry off the prize through Mr. Falconer's neglect of his opportunity. Jealousy being the test of love, he thought a spice of it might be not unseasonably thrown in.

Mr. Falconer.—Notwithstanding your example, doctor, love is to be avoided, because marriage is at best a dangerous experiment. The experience of all time demonstrates that it is seldom a happy condition. Jupiter and Juno to begin with; Venus and Vulcan. Fictions, to be sure, but they show Homer's view of the conjugal state. Agamemnon in the shades, though he congratulates Ulysses on his good fortune in having an excellent wife, advises him not to trust even her too far. Come down to realities, even to the masters of the wise: Socrates with Xantippe; Euripides with his two wives, who made him a woman-hater; Cicero, who was divorced; Marcus Aurelius.—Travel downwards: Dante, who, when he left Florence, left his wife behind him; Milton, whose first wife ran away from him; Shakspeare, who scarcely shines in the light of a happy husband. And if such be the lot of the lights of the world, what can humbler men expect?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—You have given two or three heads of a catalogue which, I admit, might be largely extended. You can never read a history, you can never open a newspaper, without seeing some example of unhappy marriage. But the conspicuous are not the frequent. In the quiet path of every day life—the *secretum iter et fallentis semita vitæ*—I could show you many couples who are really comforts and helpmates to each other. Then, above all things, children. The great blessing of old age, the one that never fails, if all else fail, is a daughter.

Mr. Falconer.—All daughters are not good.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Most are. Of all relations in life, it is the least disappointing: where parents do not so treat their daughters as to alienate their affections, which unhappily many do.

Mr. Falconer.—You do not say so much for sons.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Young men are ambitious, self-willed, self-indulgent, easily corrupted by bad example, of which there is always too much. I cannot say much for those of the present day, though it is not absolutely destitute of good specimens.

Mr. Falconer.—You know what Paterculus says of those of his own day.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—"The faith of wives towards the proscribed was great; of freed-men, middling; of slaves, some; of sons none."* So he says; but there were some: for example, of the sons of Marcus Oppius and Quintus Cicero.† You may observe, by the way, he gives the first place to the wives.

Mr. Falconer.—Well, that is a lottery in which every man must take his chance. But my scheme of life was perfect.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Perhaps there is something to be said against condemning seven young women to celibacy.

Mr. Falconer.—But if such were their choice—

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—No doubt there are many reasons why they should prefer the condition they are placed in to the ordinary chances of marriage: but after all, to be married is the natural aspiration of a young woman, and if favourable conditions presented themselves—

Mr. Falconer.—Conditions suitable to their education are scarcely compatible with their social position.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—They have been educated to be both useful and ornamental. The ornamental need not, and in their case certainly does not, damage the useful, which in itself would procure them suitable matches.

Mr. Falconer shook his head, and, after a brief pause,

* Id tamen notandum est, fuisse in proscriptos uxorem fidem summam, libertorum mediam, servorum aliquam, filiorum nullam.—PATERCULUS, l. ii. c. 67.

† A compendious and comprehensive account of these and other instances of filial piety, in the proscription of the second triumvirate, will be found in *Freinshemius; Supplementa Liviania*, cxx. 77-80.

poured out a volume of quotations, demonstrating the general unhappiness of marriage. The doctor responded by as many, demonstrating the contrary. He paused to take breath. Both laughed heartily. But the result of the discussion and the laughter was, that Mr. Falconer was curious to see Lord Curryfin, and would therefore go to Gryll Grange.

CHAPTER XIII.

LORD CURRYFIN.—SIBERIAN DINNERS.—SOCIAL MONOTONY.

Ille potens sui
Laetusque deget, cui licet in diem
Dixisse, Vixi: cras vel atrâ
Nube polum pater occupato,
Vel sole puro: non tamen irritum
Quodcumque retro est efficiet; neque
Diffinget infectumque reddet,
Quod fugiens semel hora vexit.
HOR. *Carm.* iii. 29.

Happy the man, and happy he alone,
He who can call to-day his own:
He who, secure within, can say,
To-morrow do thy worst, for I have lived to-day.
Be storm, or calm, or rain, or shine,
The joys I have possessed in spite of fate are mine.
Not heaven itself upon the past has power,
But what has been has been, and I have had my hour.
DRYDEN.

A LARGE party was assembled at the Grange. Among them were some of the young ladies who were to form the chorus; one elderly spinster, Miss Ilex, who passed more than half her life in visits, and was everywhere welcome, being always good-humoured, agreeable in conversation, having much knowledge of society, good sense in matters of conduct, good taste and knowledge in music; sound judgment in dress, which alone sufficed to make her valuable to young ladies; a fair amount of reading, old and new; and on most subjects an opinion of her own, for which she had always something to say; Mr. MacBorrowdale, an old friend of Mr. Gryll, a gentleman who comprised in himself all that Scotland had ever been supposed to possess of mental, moral,

and political philosophy; "And yet he bore it not about;" not "as being loth to wear it out,"* but because he held that there was a time for all things, and that dinner was the time for joviality, and not for argument; Mr. Minim, the amateur composer of the music for the comedy; Mr. Pallet, the amateur painter of the scenery; and last, not least, the newly-made acquaintance, Lord Curryfin.

Lord Curryfin was a man on the younger side of thirty, with a good person, handsome features, a powerful voice, and an agreeable delivery. He had a strong memory, much power of application, and a facility of learning rapidly whatever he turned his mind to. But with all this, he valued what he learned less for the pleasure which he derived from the acquisition, than from the effect which it enabled him to produce on others. He liked to shine in conversation, and there was scarcely a subject which could be mooted in any society, on which his multifarious attainments did not qualify him to say something. He was readily taken by novelty in doctrine, and followed a new lead with great pertinacity; and in this way he had been caught by the science of pantopragmatics, and firmly believed for a time, that a scientific organization for teaching everybody everything, would cure all the evils of society. But being one of those "over sharp wits whose edges are very soon turned," he did not adhere to any opinion with sufficient earnestness to be on any occasion betrayed into intemperance in maintaining it. So far from this, if he found any unfortunate opinion in a hopeless minority of the company he happened to be in, he was often chivalrous enough to come to its aid, and see what could be said for it. When lecturing became a mania, he had taken to lecturing; and looking about for an unoccupied subject, he had lighted on the natural history of fish, in which he soon became sufficiently proficient to amuse the ladies, and astonish the fishermen in any sea-side place of fashionable resort. Here he always arranged his lecture-room, so that the gentility of his audience could sit on a platform, and the natives in a

* 'Tis true, although he had much wit,
He was very shy of using it,
As being loth to wear it out;
And therefore bore it not about,
Except on holidays or so,
As men their best apparel do.—HUDIBRAS.

gallery above, and that thus the fishy and tarry odours which the latter were most likely to bring with them, might ascend into the upper air, and not mingle with the more delicate fragrances that surrounded the select company below. He took a summer tour to several watering-places, and was thoroughly satisfied with his success. The fishermen at first did not take cordially to him; but their wives attended from curiosity, and brought their husbands with them on nights not favourable to fishing; and by degrees he won on their attention, and they took pleasure in hearing him, though they learned nothing from him that was of any use in their trade. But he seemed to exalt their art in the eyes of themselves and others, and he told them some pleasant anecdotes of strange fish, and of perilous adventures of some of their own craft, which led in due time to the crowding of his gallery. The ladies went, as they always will go, to lectures, where they fancy they learn something, whether they learn anything or not; and on these occasions, not merely to hear the lecturer, but to be seen by him. To them, however attractive the lecture might have been, the lecturer was more so. He was an irresistible temptation to matrons with marriageable daughters, and wherever he sojourned he was overwhelmed with invitations. It was a contest who should have him to dinner, and in the simplicity of his heart, he ascribed to admiration of his science and eloquence, all the courtesies and compliments with which he was everywhere received. He did not like to receive unreturned favours, and never left a place in which he had accepted many invitations, without giving in return a ball and supper on a scale of great munificence; which filled up the measure of his popularity, and left on all his guests a very enduring impression of a desire to see him again.

So his time passed pleasantly, with a heart untouched by either love or care, till he fell in at a dinner party with the Reverend Doctor Opimian. The doctor spoke of Gryll Grange and the Aristophanic comedy which was to be produced at Christmas, and Lord Curryfin, with his usual desire to have a finger in every pie, expressed an earnest wish to be introduced to the squire. This was no difficult matter. The doctor had quickly brought it about, and Lord Curryfin had gone over in the doctor's company to pass a few days at the Grange. Here, in a very short time, he had made himself

completely at home; and had taken on himself the office of architect, to superintend the construction of the theatre, receiving with due deference instructions on the subject from the Reverend Doctor Opimian.

Sufficient progress had been made in the comedy for the painter and musician to begin work on their respective portions; and Lord Curryfin, whose heart was in his work, passed whole mornings in indefatigable attention to the progress of the building. It was near the house, and was to be approached by a covered way. It was a miniature of the Athenian theatre, from which it differed in having a roof, but it resembled it in the arrangements of the stage and orchestra, and in the graduated series of semicircular seats for the audience.

When dinner was announced, Mr. Gryll took in Miss Ilex. Miss Gryll, of course, took the arm of Lord Curryfin. Mr. Falconer took in one of the young ladies and placed her on the left hand of the host. The Reverend Doctor Opimian took in another, and was consequently seated between her and Miss Ilex. Mr. Falconer was thus as far removed as possible from the young lady of the house, and was consequently, though he struggled as much as possible against it, frequently *distrait*, unconsciously and unwillingly observing Miss Gryll and Lord Curryfin, and making occasional observations very wide of the mark to the fair damsels on his right and left, who set him down in their minds for a very odd young man. The soup and fish were discussed in comparative silence; the entrées not much otherwise; but suddenly a jubilant expression from Mr. MacBorrowdale hailed the disclosure of a large sirloin of beef which figured before Mr. Gryll.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—You are a man of taste, Mr. Gryll. That is a handsomer ornament of a dinner-table than clusters of nosegays, and all sorts of uneatable decorations. I detest and abominate the idea of a Siberian dinner, where you just look on fiddle-faddles, while your dinner is behind a screen, and you are served with rations like a pauper.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I quite agree with Mr. MacBorrowdale. I like to see my dinner. And herein I rejoice to have Addison on my side; for I remember a paper, in which he objects to having roast beef placed on a sideboard. Even in his day it had been displaced to make way for some incomprehensible French dishes, among which he could find nothing

to eat.* I do not know what he would have said to its being placed altogether out of sight. Still there is something to be said on the other side. There is hardly one gentleman in twenty who knows how to carve; and as to ladies, though they did know once on a time, they do not now. What can be more pitiable than the right-hand man of the lady of the house, awkward enough in himself, with the dish twisted round to him in the most awkward possible position, digging in unutterable mortification for a joint which he cannot find, and wishing the unanatomisable *volaille* behind a Russian screen with the footmen?

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—I still like to see the *volaille*. It might be put on table with its joints divided.

Mr. Gryll.—As that turkey-poult is, Mr. MacBorrowdale; which gives my niece no trouble; but the precaution is not necessary with such a right-hand man as Lord Curryfin, who carves to perfection.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Your arrangements are perfect. At the last of these Siberian dinners at which I had the misfortune to be present, I had offered me, for two of my rations, the tail of a mullet and the drum-stick of a fowl. Men who carve behind screens ought to pass a competitive examination before a jury of gastronomers. Men who carve at a table are drilled by degrees into something like tolerable operators by the mere shame of the public process.

Mr. Gryll.—I will guarantee you against a Siberian dinner, whenever you dine with me.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Mr. Gryll is a true conservative in dining.

Mr. Gryll.—A true conservative, I hope. Not what a *soi-disant* conservative is practically: a man who sails under national colours, hauls them down, and hoists the enemy's. I like old customs. I like a glass of wine with a friend. What say you, doctor? Mr. MacBorrowdale will join us?

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Most willingly.

* I was now in great hunger and confusion, when I thought I smelled the agreeable savour of roast beef; but could not tell from which dish it arose, though I did not question but it lay disguised in one of them. Upon turning my head I saw a noble sirloin on the side-table, smoking in the most delicious manner. I had recourse to it more than once, and could not see without some indignation that substantial English dish banished in so ignominious a manner, to make way for French kickshaws.—*Tatler*, No. 148.

Miss Gryll.—My uncle and the doctor have got as usual into a discussion, to the great amusement of the old lady, who sits between them and says nothing.

Lord Curryfin.—Perhaps their discussion is too recondite for her.

Miss Gryll.—No; they never talk before ladies of any subject in which ladies cannot join. And she has plenty to say for herself when she pleases. But when conversation pleases her, she likes to listen and be silent. It strikes me, by a few words that float this way, that they are discussing the Art of Dining. She ought to be a proficient in it, for she lives much in the world, and has met as many persons whom she is equally willing either to meet to-morrow, or never to meet again, as any regular *dineur en ville*. And indeed that is the price that must be paid for society. Whatever difference of character may lie under the surface, the persons you meet in its circles are externally others yet the same: the same dress, the same manners, the same tastes and opinions, real or assumed. Strongly defined characteristic differences are so few, and artificial general resemblances so many, that in every party you may always make out the same theatrical company. It is like the flowing of a river: it is always different water, but you do not see the difference.

Lord Curryfin.—For my part I do not like these monotonous exteriors. I like visible character. Now, in your party here, there is a good deal of character. Your uncle and Mr. Mac-Borrowdale are characters. Then the Reverend Doctor Opimian. He is not a man made to pattern. He is simple-minded, learned, tolerant, and the quintessence of *bonhomie*. The young gentleman who arrived to-day, the Hermit of the Folly, is evidently a character. I flatter myself, I am a character (*laughing*).

Miss Gryll (*laughing*).—Indeed you are, or rather many characters in one. I never knew a man of such infinite variety. You seem always to present yourself in the aspect in which those you are with would best wish to see you.

There was some ambiguity in the compliment; but Lord Curryfin took it as implying that his aspect in all its variety was agreeable to the young lady. He did not then dream of a rival in the Hermit of the Folly.

CHAPTER XIV.

MUSIC AND PAINTING.—JACK OF DOVER.

Οὐ φίλος, ὃς κρατῆρι παρὰ πλέῳ οἰνοποτάζων
Νείκεα καὶ πόλεμον ἐακρυόεντα λέγει,
Ἀλλ' ὅστις, Μουσέων τε καὶ ἀγλαὰ δῶρ' Ἀφροδίτης
Συμμίσγων, ἱμερτῆς μνήσκεται εὐφροσύνης.
ANACREON.

I love not him, who o'er the wine-cup's flow
Talks but of war, and strife, and scenes of woe:
But him, who can the Muses' gifts employ,
To mingle love and song with festal joy.

THE dinner and dessert passed away. The ladies retired to the drawing-room: the gentlemen discoursed over their wine. Mr. MacBorrowdale pronounced an eulogium on the port, which was cordially echoed by the divine in regard to the claret.

Mr. Falconer.—Doctor, your tastes and sympathies are very much with the Greeks; but I doubt if you would have liked their wine. Condiments of sea-water and turpentine must have given it an odd flavour; and mixing water with it, in the proportion of three to one, must have reduced the strength of merely fermented liquor to something like the smallest ale of Christophero Sly.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I must say I should not like to put either salt-water or turpentine into this claret: they would not improve its bouquet; nor to dilute it with any portion of water: it has to my mind, as it is, just the strength it ought to have, and no more. But the Greek taste was so exquisite in all matters in which we can bring it to the test, as to justify a strong presumption that in matters in which we cannot test it, it was equally correct. Salt-water and turpentine do not suit our wine: it does not follow that theirs had not in it some basis of contrast, which may have made them pleasant in combination. And it was only a few of their wines that were so treated.

Lord Curryfin.—Then it could not have been much like their drink of the present day. "My master cannot be right in his mind," said Lord Byron's man Fletcher, "or he would not have left Italy, where we had everything, to go to a

country of savages; there is nothing to eat in Greece but tough billy-goats, or to drink but spirits of turpentine."*

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—There is an ambiguous present, which somewhat perplexes me, in an epigram of Rhianus, "Here is a vessel of half-wine, half-turpentine, and a singularly lean specimen of kid: the sender, Hippocrates, is worthy of all praise."† Perhaps this was a doctor's present to a patient. Alcæus, Anacreon, and Nonnus could not have sung as they did under the inspiration of spirit of turpentine. We learn from Athenæus, and Pliny, and the old comedians, that the Greeks had a vast variety of wine, enough to suit every variety of taste. I infer the unknown from the known. We know little of their music. I have no doubt it was as excellent in its kind as their sculpture.

Mr. Minim.—I can scarcely think that, sir. They seem to have had only the minor key, and to have known no more of counterpoint than they did of perspective.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Their system of painting did not require perspective. Their main subject was on one foreground. Buildings, rocks, trees, served simply to indicate, not to delineate, the scene.

Mr. Falconer.—I must demur to their having only the minor key. The natural ascent of the voice is in the major key, and with their exquisite sensibility to sound they could not have missed the obvious expression of cheerfulness. With their three scales, diatonic, chromatic, and enharmonic, they must have exhausted every possible expression of feeling. Their scales were in true intervals; they had really major and minor tones; we have neither, but a confusion of both. They had both sharps and flats: we have neither, but a mere set of semitones, which serve for both. In their enharmonic scale the fineness of their ear perceived distinctions, which are lost on the coarseness of ours.

Mr. Minim.—With all that they never got beyond melody. They had no harmony, in our sense. They sang only in unisons and octaves.

* Trelawny's *Recollections*.

† Ἥμισυ μὲν πίσσης κωνίτιδος, ἥμισυ δ' οἴνου,
Ἀρχῖν', ἀτρεκέως ἥδε λάγυνος ἔχει·
Δεπτοτέρης δ' οὐκ οἶδ' ἐρίφου κρέας· πλὴν ὔγε πέμψας
Αἰνεῖσθαι πάντων ἄξιος Ἱπποκράτης.
Anthologia Palatina: Appendix: 72.

Mr. Falconer.—It is not clear that they did not sing in fifths. As to harmony in one sense, I will not go so far as to say with Ritson, that the only use of the harmony is to spoil the melody; but I will say, that to my taste a simple accompaniment, in strict subordination to the melody, is far more agreeable than that Niagara of sound under which it is now the fashion to bury it.

Mr. Minim.—In that case, you would prefer a song with a simple pianoforte accompaniment to the same song on the Italian stage.

Mr. Falconer.—A song sung with feeling and expression is good, however accompanied. Otherwise, the pianoforte is not much to my mind. All its intervals are false, and temperament is a poor substitute for natural intonation. Then its incapability of sustaining a note has led, as the only means of producing effect, to those infinitesimal subdivisions of sound, in which all sentiment and expression are twittered and frittered into nothingness.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I quite agree with you. The other day a band passed my gate playing "The Campbells are coming;" but instead of the fine old Scotch lilt, and the emphasis on "Oho! oho!" what they actually played was, "The Ca-a-a-a-ampbells are co-o-o-o-ming, Oh-o-ho-o-o! Oh-o-ho-o-o;" I thought to myself, There is the essence and quintessence of modern music. I like the old organ-music such as it was, when there were no keys but C and F, and every note responded to a syllable. The effect of the prolonged and sustained sound must have been truly magnificent:

> Where, through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault,
> The pealing anthem swelled the note of praise.

Who cares to hear sacred music on a piano?

Mr. Minim.—Yet I must say that there is a great charm in that brilliancy of execution, which is an exclusively modern and very modern accomplishment.

Mr. Falconer.—To those who perceive it. All things are as they are perceived. To me music has no charm without expression.

LORD CURRYFIN (*who, having observed* MR. MACBORROWDALE'S *determination not to be drawn into an argument, amused himself with asking his opinion on all subjects*).

What is your opinion, Mr. Mac Borrowdale?

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—I hold to the opinion I have already expressed, that this is as good a glass of port as ever I tasted.

Lord Curryfin.—I mean your opinion of modern music and musical instruments.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—The organ is very good for psalms, which I never sing, and the pianoforte for jigs, which I never dance. And if I were not to hear either of them from January to December, I should not complain of the privation.

Lord Curryfin.—You are an utilitarian, Mr. MacBorrowdale. You are all for utility—public utility—and you see none in music.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Nay, not exactly so. If devotion is good, if cheerfulness is good, and if music promotes each of them in proper time and place, music is useful. If I am as devout without the organ, and as cheerful without the piano, as I ever should be with them, that may be the defect of my head or my ear. I am not for forcing my tastes or no-tastes on other people. Let every man enjoy himself in his own way, while he does not annoy others. I would not deprive you of your enjoyment of a brilliant symphony, and I hope you would not deprive me of my enjoyment of a glass of old wine.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian:

> "Tres mihi convivæ prope dissentire videntur,
> Poscentes vario multum diversa palato."*

Mr. Falconer.—Nor our reverend friend of the pleasure of a classical quotation.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—And the utility, too, sir: for I think I am indebted to one for the pleasure of your acquaintance.

Mr. Falconer.—When you did me the honour to compare my house to the Palace of Circe. The gain was mine.

Mr. Pallet.—You admit, sir, that the Greeks had no knowledge of perspective.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Observing, that they had no need of it. Their subject was a foreground like a relievo. Their

* Three guests dissent most widely in their wishes:
With different taste they call for different dishes.

background was a symbol, not a representation. "No knowledge" is perhaps too strong. They had it where it was essential. They drew a peristyle, as it appeared to the eye, as accurately as we can do. In short, they gave to each distinct object its own proper perspective, but to separate objects they did not give their relative perspective, for the reason I have given, that they did not need it.

Mr. Falconer.—There is to me one great charm in their painting, as we may judge from the specimens in Pompeii, which, though not their greatest works, indicate their school. They never crowded their canvas with figures. They presented one, two, three, four, or, at most, five persons, preferring one, and rarely exceeding three. These persons were never lost in the profusion of scenery, dress, and decoration. They had clearly defined outlines, and were agreeable objects from any part of the room in which they were placed.

Mr. Pallet.—They must have lost much in beauty of detail.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Therein is the essential difference of ancient and modern taste. Simple beauty—of idea in poetry, of sound in music, of figure in painting—was their great characteristic. Ours is detail in all these matters, overwhelming detail. We have not grand outlines for the imagination of the spectator or hearer to fill up: his imagination has no play of its own: it is overloaded with *minutiæ* and kaleidoscopical colours.

Lord Curryfin.—Detail has its own beauty. I have admired a Dutch picture of a butcher's shop, where all the charm was in detail.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I cannot admire anything of the kind. I must take pleasure in the thing represented before I can derive any from the representation.

Mr. Pallet.—I am afraid, sir, as our favourite studies all lead us to extreme opinions, you think the Greek painting was the better for not having perspective, and the Greek music for not having harmony.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I think they had as much perspective and as much harmony as was consistent with that simplicity, which characterized their painting and music as much as their music and poetry.

Lord Curryfin.—What is your opinion, Mr. MacBorrowdale?

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—I think you may just buz that bottle before you.

Lord Curryfin.—I mean your opinion of Greek perspective?

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Troth, I am of opinion that a bottle looks smaller at a distance than when it is close by, and I prefer it as a full-sized object in the foreground.

Lord Curryfin.—I have often wondered that a gentleman so well qualified as you are to discuss all subjects should so carefully avoid discussing any.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—After dinner, my lord, after dinner. I work hard all the morning at serious things, sometimes till I get a headache, which, however, does not often trouble me. After dinner I like to crack my bottle and chirp and talk nonsense, and fit myself for the company of Jack of Dover.

Lord Curryfin.—Jack of Dover! Who was he?

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—He was a man who travelled in search of a greater fool than himself, and did not find him.*

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—He must have lived in odd times. In our days he would not have gone far without falling in with a teetotaller, or a decimal coinage man, or a school-for-all man, or a competitive examination man, who would not allow a drayman to lower a barrel into a cellar unless he could expound the mathematical principles by which he performed the operation.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Nay, that is all pragmatical fooling. The fooling Jack looked for was jovial fooling, fooling to the top of his bent, excellent fooling, which, under the semblance of folly, was both merry and wise. He did not look for mere unmixed folly, of which there never was a deficiency. The fool he looked for was one which it takes a wise man to make—a Shakspearian fool.†

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—In that sense he might travel far, and return, as he did in his own day, without having found the fool he loooed for.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—A teetotaller! Well! He is the true Heautontimorumenos, the self-punisher, with a jug of toast-and-water for his Christmas wassail. So far his folly

* *Jacke of Dover, His Quest of Inquirie, or His Privy Search for the Veriest Foole in England.* London. 1604. Reprinted for the Percy Society. 1842.

† Œuvre, ma foi, où n'est facile atteindre :
Pourtant qu'il faut parfaitement sage être,
Pour le vrai fol bien naïvement feindre.
EUTRAPEL, p. 28.

is merely pitiable, but his intolerance makes it offensive. He cannot enjoy his own tipple unless he can deprive me of mine. A fox that has lost his tail. There is no tyrant like a thorough-paced reformer. I drink to his own reformation.

Mr. Gryll.—He is like Bababec's faquir, who sat in a chair full of nails, *pour avoir de la considération.* But the faquir did not want others to do the same. He wanted all the consideration for himself, and kept all the nails for himself. If these meddlers would do the like by their toast-and-water, nobody would begrudge it them.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Now, sir, if the man who has fooled the greatest number of persons to the top of their bent were to be adjudged the fittest companion for Jack of Dover, you would find him in a distinguished meddler with everything, who has been for half a century the merry-andrew of a vast arena, which he calls moral and political science, but which has in it a dash of everything that has ever occupied human thought.

Lord Curryfin.—I know whom you mean; but he is a great man in his way, and has done much good.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—He has helped to introduce much change; whether for good or for ill remains to be seen. I forgot he was your lordship's friend. I apologize, and drink to his health.

Lord Curryfin.—Oh! pray, do not apologize to me. I would not have my friendships, tastes, pursuits, and predilections interfere in the slightest degree with the fullest liberty of speech on all persons and things. There are many who think with you that he is a moral and political Jack of Dover. So be it. Time will bring him to his level.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—I will only say of the distinguished personage, that Jack of Dover would not pair off with him. This is the true universal science, the oracle of *La Dive Bouteille.*

Mr. Gryll.—It is not exactly Greek music, Mr. Minim, that you are giving us for our Aristophanic choruses.

Mr. Minim.—No, sir; I have endeavoured to give you a good selection, as appropriate as I can make it.

Mr. Pallet.—Neither am I giving you Greek painting for the scenery. I have taken the liberty to introduce perspective.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Very rightly both, for Aristophanes in London.

Mr. Minim.—Besides, sir, we must have such music as your young ladies can sing.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Assuredly; and so far as we have yet heard them rehearse, they sing it delightfully.

After a little more desultory conversation, they adjourned to the drawing-rooms.

CHAPTER XV.

EXPRESSION IN MUSIC.—THE DAPPLED PALFREY.—LOVE AND AGE.—COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION.

Τοῦτο βίος, τοῦτ' αὐτό· τρυφὴ βίος· ἔρρετ' ἀνίαι·
Ζωῆς ἀνθρώποις ὀλίγος χρόνος· ἄρτι Δύαιος,
Ἄρτι χοροί, στέφανοί τε φιλανθέες, ἄρτι γυναῖκες.
Σήμερον ἐσθλὰ πάθω, τὸ γὰρ αὔριον οὐδενὶ δῆλον.
Anthologia Palatina: V. 72.

This, this is life, when pleasure drives out care.
Short is the span of time we each may share.
To-day, while love, wine, song, the hours adorn,
To-day we live: none know the coming morn.

LORD CURRYFIN'S assiduities to Miss Gryll had discomposed Mr. Falconer more than he chose to confess to himself. Lord Curryfin, on entering the drawing-rooms, went up immediately to the young lady of the house; and Mr. Falconer, to the amazement of the reverend doctor, sat down in the outer drawing-room on a sofa by the side of Miss Ilex, with whom he entered into conversation.

In the inner drawing-room some of the young ladies were engaged with music, and were entreated to continue their performance. Some of them were conversing, or looking over new publications.

After a brilliant symphony, performed by one of the young visitors, in which runs and crossings of demisemiquavers in *tempo prestissimo* occupied the principal share, Mr. Falconer asked Miss Ilex how she liked it.

Miss Ilex.—I admire it as a splendid piece of legerdemain; but it expresses nothing.

Mr. Falconer.—It is well to know that such things can be done; and when we have reached the extreme complications of art, we may hope to return to nature and simplicity.

Miss Ilex.—Not that it is impossible to reconcile execution and expression. Rubini identified the redundancies of ornament with the overflowings of feeling, and the music of Donizetti furnished him most happily with the means of developing this power. I never felt so transported out of myself as when I heard him sing, *Tu che al ciel spiegasti l'ali.*

Mr. Falconer.—Do you place Donizetti above Mozart?

Miss Ilex.—Oh, surely not. But for supplying expressive music to a singer like Rubini, I think Donizetti has no equal; at any rate no superior. For music that does not require, and does not even suit, such a singer, but which requires only to be correctly interpreted to be universally recognized as the absolute perfection of melody, harmony, and expression, I think Mozart has none. Beethoven perhaps: he composed only one opera, *Fidelio;* but what an opera that is. What an effect in the sudden change of the key, when Leonora throws herself between her husband and Pizarro: and again, in the change of the key with the change of the scene, when we pass from the prison to the hall of the palace. What pathos in the songs of affection, what grandeur in the songs of triumph, what wonderful combinations in the accompaniments, where a perpetual stream of counter-melody creeps along in the bass, yet in perfect harmony with the melody above.

Mr. Falconer.—What say you to Haydn?

Miss Ilex.—Haydn has not written operas, and my principal experience is derived from the Italian theatre. But his music is esentially dramatic. It is a full stream of perfect harmony in subjection to exquisite melody; and in simple ballad-strains, that go direct to the heart, he is almost supreme and alone. Think of that air with which every one is familiar, "My mother bids me bind my hair:" the graceful flow of the first part, the touching effect of the semitones in the second: with true intonation and true expression, the less such an air is accompanied the better.

Mr. Falconer.—There is a beauty and an appeal to the heart in ballads which will never lose its effect except on those with whom the pretence of fashion overpowers the feeling of nature.*

Miss Ilex.—It is strange, however, what influence that

* Braham said something like this to a Parliamentary Committee on Theatres, in 1832.

pretence has, in overpowering all natural feelings, not in music alone.

"Is it not curious," thought the doctor, "that there is only one old woman in the room, and that my young friend should have selected her for the object of his especial attention?"

But a few simple notes struck on the ear of his young friend, who rose from the sofa and approached the singer. The doctor took his place to cut off his retreat.

Miss Gryll, who, though a proficient in all music, was particularly partial to ballads, had just begun to sing one.

THE DAPPLED PALFREY.*

"My traitorous uncle has wooed for himself:
Her father has sold her for land and for pelf:
My steed, for whose equal the world they might search,
In mockery they borrow to bear her to church.

"Oh! there is one path through the forest so green,
Where thou and I only, my palfrey, have been:
We traversed it oft, when I rode to her bower
To tell my love tale through the rift of the tower.

"Thou know'st not my words, but thy instinct is good:
By the road to the church lies the path through the wood:
Thy instinct is good, and her love is as true:
Thou wilt see thy way homeward: dear palfrey, adieu."

They feasted full late and full early they rose,
And church-ward they rode more than half in a doze:
The steed in an instant broke off from the throng,
And pierced the green path, which he bounded along.

In vain was pursuit, though some followed pell-mell:
Through bramble and thicket they floundered and fell.
On the backs of their coursers some dozed as before,
And missed not the bride till they reached the church-door.

The knight from his keep on the forest-bound gazed:
The drawbridge was down, the portcullis was raised:
And true to his hope came the palfrey amain,
With his only loved lady, who checked not the rein.

The drawbridge went up: the portcullis went down:
The chaplain was ready with bell, book, and gown:
The wreck of the bride-train arrived at the gate;
The bride showed the ring, and they muttered "Too late!"

* Founded on *Le Vair Palefroi:* among the *Fabliaux* published by Barbazan.

"Not too late for a feast, though too late for a fray:
What's done can't be undone: make peace while you may:"
So spake the young knight, and the old ones complied,
And quaffed a deep health to the bridegroom and bride.

Mr. Falconer had listened to the ballad with evident pleasure. He turned to resume his place on the sofa, but finding it pre-occupied by the doctor, he put on a look of disappointment, which seemed to the doctor exceedingly comic.

"Surely," thought the doctor, "he is not in love with the old maid."

Miss Gryll gave up her place to a young lady, who in her turn sang a ballad of a different character.

LOVE AND AGE.

I played with you 'mid cowslips blowing,
When I was six and you were four;
When garlands weaving, flower-balls throwing,
Were pleasures soon to please no more.
Through groves and meads, o'er grass and heather,
With little playmates, to and fro,
We wandered hand in hand together;
But that was sixty years ago.

You grew a lovely roseate maiden,
And still our early love was strong;
Still with no care our days were laden,
They glided joyously along;
And I did love you very dearly,
How dearly words want power to show;
I thought your heart was touched as nearly;
But that was fifty years ago.

Then other lovers came around you,
Your beauty grew from year to year.
And many a splendid circle found you
The centre of its glittering sphere.
I saw you then, first vows forsaking,
On rank and wealth your hand bestow;
Oh, then I thought my heart was breaking,—
But that was forty years ago.

And I lived on, to wed another:
No cause she gave me to repine;
And when I heard you were a mother,
I did not wish the children mine.
My own young flock, in fair progression,
Made up a pleasant Christmas row:
My joy in them was past expression,—
But that was thirty years ago.

You grew a matron plump and comely,
You dwelt in fashion's brightest blaze;
My earthly lot was far more homely;
But I too had my festal days.
No merrier eyes have ever glistened
Around the hearth-stone's wintry glow,
Than when my youngest child was christened,—
But that was twenty years ago.

Time passed. My eldest girl was married,
And I am now a grandsire gray;
One pet of four years old I've carried
Among the wild-flowered meads to play.
In our old fields of childish pleasure,
Where now, as then, the cowslips blow,
She fills her basket's ample measure,—
And that is not ten years ago.

But though first love's impassioned blindness
Has passed away in colder light,
I still have thought of you with kindness,
And shall do, till our last good-night.
The ever-rolling silent hours
Will bring a time we shall not know,
When our young days of gathering flowers
Will be an hundred years ago.

Miss Ilex.—That is a melancholy song. But of how many first loves is it the true tale? And how many are far less happy?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—It is simple and well sung, with a distinctness of articulation not often heard.

Miss Ilex.—That young lady's voice is a perfect contralto. It is singularly beautiful, and I applaud her for keeping within her natural compass, and not destroying her voice by forcing it upwards, as too many do.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Forcing, forcing seems to be the rule of life. A young lady who forces her voice into *altissimo*, and a young gentleman who forces his mind into a receptacle for a chaos of crudities, are pretty much on a par. Both do ill, where, if they were contented with attainments within the limits of natural taste and natural capacity, they might both do well. As to the poor young men, many of them become mere crammed fowls, with the same result as Hermogenes, who, after astonishing the world with his attainments at seventeen, came to a sudden end at the age of

twenty-five, and spent the rest of a long life in hopeless imbecility.*

Miss Ilex.—The poor young men can scarcely help themselves. They are not held qualified for a profession unless they have overloaded their understanding with things of no use in it; incongruous things too, which could never be combined into the pursuits of natural taste.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Very true. Brindley would not have passed as a canal-maker, nor Edward Williams† as a bridge-builder. I saw the other day some examination papers which would have infallibly excluded Marlborough from the army and Nelson from the navy. I doubt if Haydn would have passed as a composer before a committee of lords like one of his pupils, who insisted on demonstrating to him that he was continually sinning against the rules of counterpoint; on which Haydn said to him, "I thought I was to teach you, but it seems you are to teach me, and I do not want a preceptor," and thereon he wished his lordship a good morning. Fancy Watt being asked, how much Joan of Naples got for Avignon, when she sold it to Pope Clement the Sixth, and being held unfit for an engineer because he could not tell.

Miss Ilex.—That is an odd question, doctor. But how much did she get for it?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Nothing. He promised ninety thousand golden florins, but he did not pay one of them: and that, I suppose, is the profound sense of the question. It is true he paid her after a fashion, in his own peculiar coin. He absolved her of the murder of her first husband, and perhaps he thought that was worth the money. But how many of our legislators could answer the question? Is it not strange that candidates for seats in Parliament should not be subjected to competitive examination? Plato and Persius‡ would furnish good hints for it. I should like to see honourable gentlemen having to answer such questions as are deemed necessary tests for government clerks, before they would be held qualified candidates for seats in the legislature. That would be something like a reform in the Parliament.

* Donaldson's *History of Greek Literature*, vol. iii. p. 156.
† The builder of Pont-y-Pryd.
‡ PLATO: *Alcibiades*, i.; PERSIUS: *Sat.* iv.

Oh that it were so, and I were the examiner! Ha, ha, ha, what a comedy!

The doctor's hearty laugh was contagious, and Miss Ilex joined in it. Mr. MacBorrowdale came up.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—You are as merry as if you had discovered the object of Jack of Dover's quest.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Something very like it. We have an honourable gentleman under competitive examination for a degree in legislative wisdom.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Truly, that is fooling competition to the top of its bent.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Competitive examination for clerks, and none for legislators, is not this an anomaly? Ask the honourable member for Muckborough on what acquisitions in history and mental and moral philosophy he founds his claim of competence to make laws for the nation? He can only tell you that he has been chosen as the most conspicuous Grub among the Moneygrubs of his borough to be the representative of all that is sordid, selfish, hard-hearted, unintellectual, and antipatriotic, which are the distinguishing qualities of the majority among them. Ask a candidate for a clerkship what are his qualifications? He may answer, "All that are requisite: reading, writing, and arithmetic." "Nonsense," says the questioner. "Do you know the number of miles in direct distance from Timbuctoo to the top of Chimborazo?" "I do not," says the candidate. "Then you will not do for a clerk," says the competitive examiner. Does Moneygrub of Muckborough know? He does not; nor anything else. The clerk may be able to answer some of the questions put to him. Moneygrub could not answer one of them. But he is very fit for a legislator.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Eh! but he is subjected to a pretty severe competitive examination of his own, by what they call a constituency, who just put him to the test in the art of conjuring, to see if he can shift money from his own pocket into theirs, without any inconvenient third party being aware of the transfer.

CHAPTER XVI.

MISS NIPHET.—THE THEATRE.—THE LAKE.—DIVIDED ATTRACTION.—INFALLIBLE SAFETY.

> Amiam: che non ha tregua
> Con gli anni umana vita, e si dilegua.
> Amiam; che il sol si muore, e poi rinasce;
> A noi sua breve luce
> S'asconde, e il sonno eterna notte adduce.
> TASSO: *Aminta.*

> Love, while youth knows its prime,
> For mortal life can make no truce with time.
> Love: for the sun goes down to rise as bright;
> To us his transient light
> Is veiled, and sleep comes on with everlasting night.

LORD CURRYFIN was too much a man of the world to devote his attentions in society exclusively to one, and make them the subject of special remark. He left the inner drawing-room, and came up to the doctor to ask him if he knew the young lady who had sung the last ballad. The doctor knew her well. She was Miss Niphet, the only daughter of a gentleman of fortune, residing a few miles distance.

Lord Curryfin.—As I looked at her while she was singing, I thought of Southey's description of Laila's face in *Thalaba:*

> A broad light floated o'er its marble paleness,
> As the wind waved the fountain fire.

Marble paleness suits her well. There is something statuesque in her whole appearance. I could not help thinking what an admirable Camilla she would make in Cimarosa's *Orazii.* Her features are singularly regular. They had not much play, but the expression of her voice was such as if she felt the full force of every sentiment she uttered.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I consider her to be a person of very deep feeling, which she does not choose should appear on the surface. She is animated in conversation when she led into it. Otherwise, she is silent and retiring, but obl ing in the extreme; always ready to take part in anythi

that is going forward. She never needs, for example, being twice asked to sing. She is free from the vice which Horace ascribes to all singers, of not complying when asked, and never leaving off when they have once begun. If this be a general rule, she is an exception to it.

Lord Curryfin.—I rather wonder she does not tinge her cheeks with a slight touch of artificial red, just as much as would give her a sort of blush-rose complexion.

Miss Ilex.—You will not wonder when you know her better. The artificial, the false in any degree, however little, is impossible to her. She does not show all she thinks and feels, but what she does show is truth itself.

Lord Curryfin.—And what part is she to take in the Aristophanic comedy?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—She is to be the leader of the chorus.

Lord Curryfin.—I have not seen her at the rehearsals.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—So far, her place has been supplied. You will see her at the next.

In the meantime Mr. Falconer had gone into the inner drawing-room, sat down by Miss Gryll, and entered into conversation with her. The doctor observed them from a distance, but with all the opportunity he had had for observation, he was still undetermined in his opinion of the impression they might have made on each other.

"It is well," he said to himself, "that Miss Ilex is an old maid. If she were as young as Morgana, I think she would win our young friend's heart. Her mind is evidently much to his mind. But so would Morgana's be, if she could speak it as freely. She does not; why not? To him at any rate. She seems under no restraint to Lord Curryfin. A good omen, perhaps. I never saw a couple so formed for each other. Heaven help me! I cannot help harping on that string. After all, the Vestals are the obstacle."

Lord Curryfin, seeing Miss Niphet sitting alone at the side of the room, changed his place, sate down by her, and entered into conversation on the topics of the day, novels, operas, pictures, and various phenomena of London life. She kept up the ball with him very smartly. She was every winter, May, and June, in London, mixed much in society, and saw everything that was to be seen. Lord Curryfin, with all his Protean accomplishments, could not start a subject on which she had not something to say. But she originated

nothing. He spoke, and she answered. One thing he remarked as singular, that though she spoke with knowledge of many things, she did not speak as with taste or distaste of any. The world seemed to flow under her observation without even ruffling the surface of her interior thoughts. This perplexed his versatile lordship. He thought the young lady would be a subject worth studying: it was clear that she was a character. So far so well. He felt that he should not rest satisfied till he was able to define it.

The theatre made rapid progress. The walls were completed. The building was roofed in. The stage portion was so far finished as to allow Mr. Pallet to devote every morning to the scenery. The comedy was completed. The music was composed. The rehearsals went on with vigour, but for the present in the drawing-rooms.

Miss Niphet, returning one morning from a walk before breakfast, went into the theatre to see its progress, and found Lord Curryfin swinging over the stage on a seat suspended by long ropes from above the visible scene. He did not see her. He was looking upwards, not as one indulging in an idle pastime, but as one absorbed in serious meditation. All at once the seat was drawn up, and he disappeared in the blue canvas that represented the sky. She was not aware that gymnastics were to form part of the projected entertainment, and went away, associating the idea of his lordship, as many had done before, with something like a feeling of the ludicrous.

Miss Niphet was not much given to laughter, but whenever she looked at Lord Curryfin during breakfast she could not quite suppress a smile which hovered on her lips, and which was even the more forced on her by the contrast between his pantomimic disappearance and his quiet courtesy and remarkably good manners in company. The lines of Dryden—

> A man so various, that he seemed to be
> Not one, but all mankind's epitome,

—passed through her mind as she looked at him.

Lord Curryfin noticed the suppressed smile, but did not apprehend that it had any relation to himself. He thought some graceful facetiousness had presented itself to the mind of the young lady, and that she was amusing herself with

her own fancy. It was, however, to him another touch of character, that lighted up her statuesque countenance with a new and peculiar beauty. By degrees her features resumed their accustomed undisturbed serenity. Lord Curryfin felt satisfied that in that aspect he had somewhere seen something like her, and after revolving a series of recollections, he remembered that it was a statue of Melpomene.

There was in the park a large lake, encircled with varieties of woodland, and by its side was a pavilion to which Miss Niphet often resorted to read in an afternoon. And at no great distance from it was the boat-house, to which Lord Curryfin often resorted for a boat, to row or sail on the water. Passing the pavilion in the afternoon, he saw the young lady, and entering into conversation, ascertained what had so amused her in the morning. He told her he had been trying —severally by himself, and collectively with the workmen— the strength of the suspending lines for the descent of the Chorus of Clouds in the Aristophanic comedy. She said she had been very ungrateful to laugh at the result of his solicitude for the safety of herself and her young friends. He said that in having moved her to smile, even at his expense, he considered himself amply repaid.

From this time they often met in the pavilion, that is to say, he often found her reading there on his way to a boat, and stopped awhile to converse with her. They had always plenty to say, and it resulted that he was always sorry to leave her, and she was always sorry to part with him. By degrees the feeling of the ludicrous ceased to be the predominant sentiment which she associated with him. *L'amour vient sans qu'on y pense.*

The days shortened, and all things were sufficiently advanced to admit of rehearsals in the theatre. The hours from twelve to two—from noon to luncheon—were devoted to this pleasant pastime. At luncheon there was much merriment over the recollections of the morning's work, and after luncheon there was walking in the park, rowing or sailing on the lake, riding or driving in the adjacent country, archery in a spacious field, and in bad weather billiards, reading in the library, music in the drawing-rooms, battledoor and shuttlecock in the hall; in short, all the methods of passing time agreeably which are available to good company, when there are ample means and space for their exercise; to say nothing

of making love, which Lord Curryfin did with all delicacy and discretion—directly to Miss Gryll, as he had begun, and indirectly to Miss Niphet, for whom he felt an involuntary and almost unconscious admiration. He had begun to apprehend that with the former he had a dangerous rival in the Hermit of the Folly, and he thought the latter had sufficient charms to console even Orlando for the loss of Angelica. In short, Miss Gryll had first made him think of marriage, and whenever he thought his hopes were dim in that quarter, he found an antidote to despair in the contemplation of the statue-like damsel.

Mr. Falconer took more and more pleasure in Miss Gryll's society, but he did not declare himself. He was more than once on the point of doing so, but the images of the Seven Sisters rose before him, and he suspended the intention. On these occasions he always went home for a day or two to fortify his resolution against his heart. Thus he passed his time between the Grange and the Tower, "letting I dare not wait upon I would."

Miss Gryll had listened to Lord Curryfin. She had neither encouraged nor discouraged him. She thought him the most amusing person she had ever known. She liked his temper, his acquirements, and his manners. She could not divest herself of that feeling of the ludicrous which everybody seemed to associate with him; but she thought the chances of life presented little hope of a happier marriage than a woman who would fall in with his tastes and pursuits—which, notwithstanding their tincture of absurdity, were entertaining and even amiable—might hope for with him. Therefore, she would not say, No, though, when she thought of Mr. Falconer, she could not say, Yes.

Lord Curryfin invented a new sail of infallible safety, which resulted, like most similar inventions, in capsizing the inventor on the first trial. Miss Niphet, going one afternoon, later than usual, to her accustomed pavilion, found his lordship scrambling up the bank, and his boat, keel upwards, at some little distance in the lake. For a moment her usual self-command forsook her. She held out both her hands to assist him up the bank, and as soon as he stood on dry land, dripping like a Triton in trousers, she exclaimed in such a tone as he had never before heard, "Oh! my dear lord!" Then, as if conscious of her momentary aberration, she

blushed with a deeper blush than that of the artificial rose which he had once thought might improve her complexion. She attempted to withdraw her hands, but he squeezed them both ardently, and exclaimed in his turn, like a lover in a tragedy,

"Surely, till now I never looked on beauty."

She was on the point of saying, "Surely, before now you have looked on Miss Gryll," but she checked herself. She was content to receive the speech as a sudden ebullition of gratitude for sympathy, and disengaging her hands, she insisted on his returning immediately to the house to change his "dank and dripping weeds."

As soon as he was out of sight she went to the boat-house, to summon the men who had charge of it to the scene of the accident. Putting off in another boat, they brought the capsized vessel to land, and hung up the sail to dry. She returned in the evening, and finding the sail dry, she set it on fire. Lord Curryfin, coming down to look after his tackle, found the young lady meditating over the tinder. She said to him,

"That sail will never put you under the water again."

He was touched by this singular development of solicitude for his preservation, but could not help saying something in praise of his invention, giving a demonstration of the infallibility of the principle, with several scientific causes of error in working out the practice. He had no doubt it would be all right on another experiment. Seeing that her looks expressed unfeigned alarm at this announcement, he assured her that her kind interest in his safety was sufficient to prevent his trying his invention again. They walked back together to the house, and in the course of conversation she said to him,

"The last time I saw the words Infallible Safety, they were painted on the back of a stage-coach, which in one of our summer tours we saw lying by the side of the road, with its top in a ditch, and its wheels in the air."

The young lady was still a mystery to Lord Curryfin.

"Sometimes," he said to himself, "I could almost fancy Melpomene in love with me. But I have seldom seen her laugh, and when she has done so now and then, it has usually been at me. That is not much like love. Her last remark was anything but a compliment to my inventive genius."

CHAPTER XVII.

HORSE TAMING.—LOVE IN DILEMMA.—INJUNCTIONS.—SONOROUS VASES.

O gran contrasto in giovenil pensiero,
Desir di laude, ed impeto d'amore!
ARIOSTO: c. 25.

How great a strife in youthful minds can raise
Impulse of love, and keen desire of praise.

LORD CURRYFIN, amongst his multifarious acquirements, had taken lessons from the great horse-tamer, and thought himself as well qualified as his master to subdue any animal of the species, however vicious. It was therefore with great pleasure he heard that there was a singularly refractory specimen in Mr. Gryll's stables. The next morning after hearing this, he rose early, and took his troublesome charge in hand. After some preliminary management he proceeded to gallop him round and round a large open space in the park, which was visible from the house. Miss Niphet, always an early riser, and having just prepared for a walk, saw him from her chamber window engaged in this perilous exercise, and though she knew nothing of the peculiar character of his recalcitrant disciple, she saw by its shakings, kickings, and plungings, that it was exerting all its energies to get rid of its rider. At last it made a sudden dash into the wood, and disappeared among the trees.

It was to the young lady a matter of implicit certainty that some disaster would ensue. She pictured to herself all the contingencies of accident; being thrown to the ground and kicked by the horse's hoofs, being dashed against a tree, or suspended, like Absalom, by the hair. She hurried down and hastened towards the wood, from which, just as she reached it, the rider and horse emerged at full speed as before. But as soon as Lord Curryfin saw Miss Niphet, he took a graceful wheel round, and brought the horse to a stand by her side; for by this time he had mastered the animal, and brought it to the condition of Sir Walter's hunter in Wordsworth:—

Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned
And foaming like a mountain cataract.*

* Heartleap Well.

She did not attempt to dissemble that she had come to look for him, but said,

"I expected to find you killed."

He said, "You see, all my experiments are not failures. I have been more fortunate with the horse than the sail."

At this moment one of the keepers appeared at a little distance. Lord Curryfin beckoned to him, and asked him to take the horse to the stables. The keeper looked with some amazement, and exclaimed,

"Why, this is the horse that nobody could manage!"

"You will manage him easily enough now," said Lord Curryfin.

So it appeared; and the keeper took charge of him, not altogether without misgiving.

Miss Niphet's feelings had been over-excited, the more so from the severity with which she was accustomed to repress them. The energy which had thus far upheld her, suddenly gave way. She sat down on a fallen tree, and burst into tears. Lord Curryfin sat down by her, and took her hand. She allowed him to retain it awhile; but all at once snatched it from him and sped towards the house over the grass, with the swiftness and lightness of Virgil's Camilla, leaving his lordship as much astonished at her movements as the Volscian crowd, *attonitis inhians animis*,* had been at those of her prototype. He could not help thinking, "Few women run gracefully; but she runs like another Atalanta."

When the party met at breakfast, Miss Niphet was in her place, looking more like a statue than ever, with, if possible, more of marble paleness. Lord Curryfin's morning exploit, of which the story had soon found its way from the stable to the hall, was the chief subject of conversation. He had received a large share of what he had always so much desired —applause and admiration; but now he thought he would willingly sacrifice all he had ever received in that line, to see even the shadow of a smile, or the expression of a sentiment of any kind, on the impassive face of Melpomene. She left the room when she rose from the breakfast-table, appeared at the rehearsal, and went through her part as usual; sat down at luncheon, and departed as soon as it was over. She answered, as she had always done, everything that was said to

* Gaping with wondering minds.

her, frankly, and to the purpose; and also, as usual, she originated nothing.

In the afternoon Lord Curryfin went down to the pavilion. She was not there. He wandered about the grounds in all directions, and returned several times to the pavilion, always in vain. At last he sat down in the pavilion, and fell into a meditation. He asked himself how it could be, that having begun by making love to Miss Gryll, having, indeed, gone too far to recede unless the young lady absolved him, he was now evidently in a transition state towards a more absorbing and violent passion, for a person who, with all her frankness, was incomprehensible, and whose snowy exterior seemed to cover a volcanic fire, which she struggled to repress, and was angry with herself when she did not thoroughly succeed in so doing. If he were quite free he would do his part towards the solution of the mystery, by making a direct and formal proposal to her. As a preliminary to this, he might press Miss Gryll for an answer. All he had yet obtained from her was, "Wait till we are better acquainted." He was in a dilemma between Morgana and Melpomene. It had not entered into his thoughts that Morgana was in love with him; but he thought it nevertheless very probable that she was in a fair way to become so, and that even as it was she liked him well enough to accept him. On the other hand, he could not divest himself of the idea that Melpomene was in love with him. It was true, all the sympathy she had yet shown might have arisen from the excitement of strong feelings, at the real or supposed peril of a person with whom she was in the habit of daily intercourse. It might be so. Still the sympathy was very impassioned; though, but for his rashness in self-exposure to danger, he might never have known it. A few days ago, he would not press Miss Gryll for an answer, because he feared it might be a negative. Now he would not, because he was at least not in haste for an affirmative. But supposing it were a negative, what certainty had he that a negative from Morgana would not be followed by a negative from Melpomene? Then his heart would be at sea without rudder or compass. We shall leave him awhile to the contemplation of his perplexities.

As his thoughts were divided, so were Morgana's. If Mr. Falconer should propose to her, she felt she could accept him without hesitation. She saw clearly the tendency of his

feelings towards her. She saw, at the same time, that he strove to the utmost against them in behalf of his old associations, though, with all his endeavours, he could not suppress them in her presence. So there was the lover who did not propose, and who would have been preferred; and there was the lover who had proposed, and who, if it had been clear that the former chance was hopeless, would not have been lightly given up.

If her heart had been as much interested in Lord Curryfin as it was in Mr. Falconer, she would quickly have detected a diminution in the ardour of his pursuit; but so far as she might have noticed any difference in his conduct, she ascribed it only to deference to her recommendation to "wait till they were better acquainted." The longer and the more quietly he waited, the better it seemed to please her. It was not on him, but on Mr. Falconer, that the eyes of her observance were fixed. She would have given Lord Curryfin his liberty instantly if she had thought he wished it.

Mr. Falconer also had his own dilemma, between his new love and his old affections. Whenever the first seemed likely to gain the ascendancy, the latter rose in their turn, like Antaeus from earth, with renovated strength. And he kept up their force by always revisiting the Tower, when the contest seemed doubtful.

Thus, Lord Curryfin and Mr. Falconer were rivals, with a new phase of rivalry. In some of their variations of feeling, each wished the other success; the latter, because he struggled against a spell that grew more and more difficult to be resisted; the former, because he had been suddenly overpowered by the same kind of light that had shone from the statue of Pygmalion. Thus their rivalry, such as it was, was entirely without animosity, and in no way disturbed the harmony of the Aristophanic party.

The only person concerned in these complications whose thoughts and feelings were undivided, was Miss Niphet. She had begun by laughing at Lord Curryfin, and had ended by forming a decided partiality for him. She contended against the feeling; she was aware of his intentions towards Miss Gryll; and she would perhaps have achieved a conquest over herself, if her sympathies had not been kept in a continual fever by the rashness with which he exposed himself to accidents by flood and field. At the same time, as she was more interested in observing Morgana than Morgana was in observ-

ing her, she readily perceived the latter's predilection for Mr. Falconer, and the gradual folding around him of the enchanted net. These observations, and the manifest progressive concentration of Lord Curryfin's affections on herself, showed her that she was not in the way of inflicting any very severe wound on her young friend's feelings, or encouraging a tendency to absolute hopelessness in her own.

Lord Curryfin was pursuing his meditations in the pavilion, when the young lady, whom he had sought there in vain, presented herself before him in great agitation. He started up to meet her, and held out both his hands. She took them both, held them a moment, disengaged them, and sat down at a little distance, which he immediately reduced to nothing. He then expressed his disappointment at not having previously found her in the pavilion, and his delight at seeing her now. After a pause, she said: "I felt so much disturbed in the morning, that I should have devoted the whole day to recovering calmness of thought, but for something I have just heard. My maid tells me that you are going to try that horrid horse in harness, and in a newly-invented high phaeton of your own, and that the grooms say they would not drive that horse in any carriage, nor any horse in that carriage, and that you have a double chance of breaking your neck. I have disregarded all other feelings to entreat you to give up your intention."

Lord Curryfin assured her that he felt too confident in his power over horses, and in the safety of his new invention, to admit the possibility of danger: but that it was a very small sacrifice to her to restrict himself to tame horses and low carriages, or to abstinence from all horses and carriages, if she desired it.

"And from sailing-boats," she added.

"And from sailing-boats," he answered.

"And from balloons," she said.

"And from balloons," he answered. "But what made you think of balloons?"

"Because," she said, "they are dangerous, and you are inquiring and adventurous."

"To tell you the truth," he said, "I have been up in a balloon. I thought it the most charming excursion I ever made. I have thought of going up again. I have invented a valve——"

"Oh heavens!" she exclaimed. "But I have your promise touching horses, and carriages, and sails, and balloons."

"You have," he said. "It shall be strictly adhered to."

She rose to return to the house. But this time he would not part with her, and they returned together.

Thus prohibited by an authority to which he yielded implicit obedience, from trying further experiments at the risk of his neck, he restricted his inventive faculty to safer channels, and determined that the structure he was superintending should reproduce, as far as possible, all the peculiarities of the Athenian Theatre. Amongst other things, he studied attentively the subject of the *êcheia*, or sonorous vases, which, in that vast theatre, propagated and clarified sound; and though in its smaller representative they were not needed, he thought it still possible that they might produce an agreeable effect. But with all the assistance of the Reverend Doctor Opimian, he found it difficult to arrive at a clear idea of their construction, or even of their principle; for the statement of Vitruvius, that they gave an accordant resonance in the fourth, the fifth, and the octave, seemed incompatible with the idea of changes of key, and not easily reconcilable with the doctrine of Harmonics. At last he made up his mind that they had no reference to key, but solely to pitch, modified by duly proportioned magnitude and distance; he therefore set to work assiduously, got a number of vases made, ascertained that they would give a resonance of some kind, and had them disposed at proper intervals, round the audience part of the building. This being done, the party assembled, some as audience, some as performers, to judge of the effect. The first burst of choral music produced a resonance, like the sound produced by sea-shells when placed against the ear, only many times multipled, and growing like the sound of a gong: it was the exaggerated concentration of the symphony of a lime-grove full of cockchafers,* on a fine evening in the early summer. The experiment was then tried with single voices: the hum was less in itself, but greater in proportion. It was then tried with speaking: the result was the same: a powerful and perpetual hum, not resonant peculiarly to the

* The drone of the cockchafer, as he wheels by you in drowsy hum, sounds his corno di bassetto on F below the line.—GARDINER'S *Music of Nature.*

diatessaron, the diapente, or the diapason, but making a new variety of continuous fundamental bass.

"I am satisfied," said Lord Curryfin, "the art of making these vases is as hopelessly lost as that of making mummies." Miss Niphet encouraged him to persevere. She said:

"You have produced a decided resonance: the only thing is to subdue it, which you may perhaps effect by diminishing the number and enlarging the intervals of the vases."

He determined to act on the suggestion, and she felt that, for some little time at least, she had kept him out of mischief. But whenever anything was said or sung in the theatre, it was necessary, for the time, to remove the *êcheia*.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LECTURES.—THE POWER OF PUBLIC OPINION.—A NEW ORDER OF CHIVALRY.

> Si, Mimnermus uti censet, sine amore jocisque
> Nil est jucundum, vivas in amore jocisque.
> HOR. *Epist.* I. vi. 65, 66.
>
> If, as Mimnermus held, nought else can move
> Your soul to pleasure, live in sports and love.

THE theatre was completed, and was found to be, without the *êcheia*, a fine vehicle of sound. It was tried, not only in the morning rehearsals, but occasionally, and chiefly on afternoons of bad weather, by recitations, and even lectures; for though some of the party attached no value to that mode of dogmatic instruction, yet with the majority, and especially with the young ladies, it was decidedly in favour.

One rainy afternoon Lord Curryfin was entreated to deliver in the theatre his lecture on Fish. He readily complied, and succeeded in amusing his audience more, and instructing them as much, as any of his more pretentious brother lecturers could have done. We shall not report the lecture, but we refer those who may be curious on the subject to the next meeting of the Pantopragmatic Society, under the presidency of Lord Facing-both-ways, and the vice-presidency of Lord Michin Malicho.

At intervals in similar afternoons of bad weather some others of the party were requested to favour the company with lectures or recitations in the theatre.

a lecture on music, Mr. Pallet on painting; Mr. Falconer, though not used to lecturing, got up one on domestic life in the Homeric age. Even Mr. Gryll took his turn, and expounded the Epicurean philosophy. Mr. MacBorrowdale, who had no objection to lectures before dinner, delivered one on all the affairs of the world—foreign and domestic, moral, political, and literary. In the course of it he touched on Reform. "The stone which Lord Michin Malicho—who was the Gracchus of the last Reform, and is the Sisyphus of the present—has been so laboriously pushing up hill, is for the present deposited at the bottom in the Limbo of Vanity. If it should ever surmount the summit and run down on the other side, it will infallibly roll over and annihilate the franchise of the educated classes; for it would not be worth their while to cross the road to exercise it against the rabble preponderance which would then have been created. Thirty years ago, Lord Michin Malicho had several cogent arguments in favour of Reform. One was, that the people were roaring for it, and that therefore they must have it. He has now in its favour the no less cogent argument, that the people do not care about it, and that the less it is asked for the greater will be the grace of the boon. On the former occasion the out-of-door logic was irresistible. Burning houses, throwing dead cats and cabbage-stumps into carriages, and other varieties of the same system of didactics, demonstrated the fitness of those who practised them to have representatives in Parliament. So they got their representatives, and many think Parliament would have been better without them. My father was a stanch Reformer. In his neighbourhood in London was the place of assembly of a Knowledge-is-Power Club. The members, at the close of their meetings, collected mending-stones from the road, and broke the windows to the right and left of their line of march. They had a flag on which was inscribed 'The power of public opinion.' Whenever the enlightened assembly met, my father closed his shutters, but, closing within, they did not protect the glass. One morning he picked up, from where it had fallen between the window and the shutter, a very large, and consequently very demonstrative, specimen of dialectical granite. He preserved it carefully, and mounted it on a handsome pedestal, inscribed with 'The power of public opinion.' He placed it on the middle of his library mantelpiece, and the daily contempla-

tion of it cured him of his passion for Reform. During the rest of his life he never talked, as he had used to do, of 'the people:' he always said 'the rabble,' and delighted in quoting every passage of *Hudibras* in which the rabble-rout is treated as he had come to conclude it ought to be. He made this piece of granite the nucleus of many political disquisitions. It is still in my possession, and I look on it with veneration as my principal tutor, for it had certainly a large share in the elements of my education. If, which does not seem likely, another reform lunacy should arise in my time, I shall take care to close my shutters against 'The power of public opinion.'

The Reverend Doctor Opimian being called on to contribute his share to these diversions of rainy afternoons, said:

"The sort of prose lecture which I am accustomed to deliver would not be exactly appropriate to the present time and place. I will therefore recite to you some verses, which I made some time since, on what appeared to me a striking specimen of absurdity on the part of the advisers of royalty here—the bestowing the honours of knighthood, which is a purely Christian institution, on Jews and Paynim; very worthy persons in themselves, and entitled to any mark of respect befitting their class, but not to one strictly and exclusively Christian; money-dealers, too, of all callings the most antipathetic to that of a true knight. The contrast impressed itself on me as I was reading a poem of the twelfth century, by Hues de Tabaret—*L'Ordène de Chevalerie*—and I endeavoured to express the contrast in the manner and form following:

A NEW ORDER OF CHIVALRY.

I.

Sir Moses, Sir Aaron, Sir Jamramajee,
Two stock-jobbing Jews, and a shroffing Parsee,
Have girt on the armour of old Chivalrie,
And, instead of the Red Cross, have hoisted Balls Three.

Now fancy our Sovereign, so gracious and bland,
With the sword of Saint George in her royal right hand,
Instructing this trio of marvellous Knights
In the mystical meanings of Chivalry's rites.

"You have come from the bath, all in milk-white array,
To show you have washed worldly feelings away,
And, pure as your vestments from secular stain,
Renounce sordid passions and seekings for gain.

"This scarf of deep red o'er your vestments I throw,
In token, that down them your life-blood shall flow,
Ere Chivalry's honour, or Christendom's faith,
Shall meet, through your failure, or peril or scaith.

"These slippers of silk, of the colour of earth,
Are in sign of remembrance of whence you had birth;
That from earth you have sprung, and to earth you return,
But stand for the faith, life immortal to earn.

"This blow of the sword, on your shoulder-blades true,
Is the mandate of homage, where homage is due,
And the sign, that your swords from the scabbard shall fly,
When 'St. George and the Right' is the rallying cry.

"This belt of white silk, which no speck has defaced,
Is the sign of a bosom with purity graced,
And binds you to prove, whatsoever betides,
Of damsels distressed the friends, champions, and guides.

"These spurs of pure gold are the symbols which say,
As your steeds obey them, you the Church shall obey,
And speed at her bidding, through country and town,
To strike, with your faulchions, her enemies down."

II.

Now fancy these Knights, when the speech they have heard,
As they stand, scarfed, shoed, shoulder-dubbed, belted and spurred,
With the cross-handled sword duly sheathed on the thigh,
Thus simply and candidly making reply:

"By your majesty's grace we have risen up Knights,
But we feel little relish for frays and for fights:
There are heroes enough, full of spirit and fire,
Always ready to shoot and be shot at for hire.

"True, with bulls and with bears we have battled our cause;
But the bulls have no horns, and the bears have no paws;
And the mightiest blow which we ever have struck,
Has achieved but the glory of laming a duck.*

* In Stock Exchange slang, Bulls are speculators for a rise, Bears for a fall. A lame duck is a man who cannot pay his differences, and is said to waddle off. The patriotism of the money-market is well touched by Ponsard, in his comedy *La Bourse:* Acte IV. Scène 3:—

ALFRED.

Quand nous sommes vainqueurs, dire qu'on a baissé!
Si nous étions battus, on aurait donc haussé?

DELATOUR.

On a craint qu'un succès, si brillant pour la France,
De la paix qu'on rêvait n'éloginât l'espérance.

ALFRED.

Cette Bourse, morbleu! n'a donc rien dans le cœur!
Ventre affamé n'a point d'oreilles . . . pour l'honneur!
Aussi je ne veux plus jouer—qu'après ma noce—
Et j'attends Waterloo pour me mettre à la hausse.

"With two nations in arms, friends impartial to both,
To raise each a loan we shall be nothing loth;
We will lend them the pay, to fit men for the fray;
But shall keep ourselves carefully out of the way.

"We have small taste for championing maids in distress:
For State we care little: for Church we care less:
To Premium and Bonus our homage we plight:
'Percentage!' we cry: and 'A fig for the right!'

"'Twixt Saint George and the Dragon, we settle it thus:
Which has scrip above par, is the Hero for us:
For a turn in the market, the Dragon's red gorge
Shall have our free welcome to swallow Saint George."

Now God save our Queen, and if aught should occur,
To peril the crown, or the safety of her,
God send that the leader, who faces the foe,
May have more of King Richard than Moses and Co.

CHAPTER XIX.

A SYMPOSIUM.—TRANSATLANTIC TENDENCIES.—AFTER-DINNER LECTURES.—EDUCATION.

TRINCQ est ung mot panomphée, célébré et entendu de toutes nations, et nous signifie, BEUUEZ. Et ici maintenons que non rire, ains boyre est le propre de l'homme. Je ne dy boyre simplement et absolument, car aussy bien boyvent les bestes; je dy boyre vin bon et fraiz.—RABELAIS: l. v. c. 45.

SOME guests remained. Some departed and returned. Among these was Mr. MacBorrowdale. One day after dinner, on one of his reappearances, Lord Curryfin said to him:—

"Well, Mr. MacBorrowdale, in your recent observations, have you found anything likely to satisfy Jack of Dover, if he were prosecuting his inquiry among us?"

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Troth, no, my lord. I think, if he were among us, he would give up the search as hopeless. He found it so in his own day, and he would find it still more so now. Jack was both merry and wise. We have less mirth in practice; and we have more wisdom in pretension, which Jack would not have admitted.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—He would have found it like Juvenal's search for patriotic virtue, when Catiline was everywhere, and Brutus and Cato were nowhere.*

* Et Catilinam
Quocumque in populo videas, quocumque sub axe:
Sed nec Brutus erit, Bruti nec avunculus usquam.
JUV. *Sat.* xiv. 41–43.

Lord Curryfin.—Well, among us, if Jack did not find his superior, or even his equal, he would not have been at a loss for company to his mind. There is enough mirth for those who choose to enjoy it, and wisdom too, perhaps as much as he would have cared for. We ought to have more wisdom, as we have clearly more science.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Science is one thing, and wisdom is another. Science is an edged tool, with which men play like children, and cut their own fingers. If you look at the results which science has brought in its train, you will find them to consist almost wholly in elements of mischief. See how much belongs to the word Explosion alone, of which the ancients knew nothing. Explosions of powder-mills and powder-magazines; of coal-gas in mines and in houses; of high-pressure engines in ships and boats and factories. See the complications and refinements of modes of destruction, in revolvers and rifles and shells and rockets and cannon. See collisions and wrecks and every mode of disaster by land and by sea, resulting chiefly from the insanity for speed, in those who for the most part have nothing to do at the end of the race, which they run as if they were so many Mercuries, speeding with messages from Jupiter. Look at our scientific drainage, which turns refuse into poison. Look at the subsoil of London, whenever it is turned up to the air, converted by gas leakage into one mass of pestilent blackness, in which no vegetation can flourish, and above which, with the rapid growth of the ever-growing nuisance, no living thing will breathe with impunity. Look at our scientific machinery, which has destroyed domestic manufacture, which has substituted rottenness for strength in the thing made, and physical degradation in crowded towns for healthy and comfortable country life in the makers. The day would fail, if I should attempt to enumerate the evils which science has inflicted on mankind. I almost think it is the ultimate destiny of science to exterminate the human race.

Lord Curryfin.—You have gone over a wide field, which we might exhaust a good bin of claret in fully discussing. But surely the facility of motion over the face of the earth and sea is both pleasant and profitable. We may now see the world with little expenditure of labour or time.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—You may be whisked over it, but

you do not see it. You go from one great town to another, where manners and customs are not even now essentially different, and with this facility of intercourse become progressively less and less so. The intermediate country—which you never see, unless there is a show mountain, or waterfall, or ruin, for which there is a station, and to which you go as you would to any other exhibition—the intermediate country contains all that is really worth seeing, to enable you to judge of the various characteristics of men and the diversified objects of nature.

Lord Curryfin.—You can suspend your journey if you please, and see the intermediate country, if you prefer it.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—But who does prefer it? You travel round the world by a hand-book, as you do round an exhibition-room by a catalogue.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Not to say that in the intermediate country you are punished by bad inns and bad wine; of which I confess myself intolerant. I knew an unfortunate French tourist, who had made the round of Switzerland, and had but one expression for every stage of his journey: *Mauvais auberge!*

Lord Curryfin.—Well, then, what say you to the electric telegraph, by which you converse at the distance of thousands of miles? Even across the Atlantic, as no doubt we shall yet do.

Mr. Gryll.—Some of us have already heard the doctor's opinion on that subject.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I have no wish to expedite communication with the Americans. If we could apply the power of electrical repulsion to preserve us from ever hearing anything more of them, I should think that we had for once derived a benefit from science.

Mr. Gryll.—Your love for the Americans, doctor, seems something like that of Cicero's friend Marius for the Greeks. He would not take the nearest road to his villa, because it was called the Greek Road.* Perhaps if your nearest way home were called the American Road, you would make a circuit to avoid it.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I am happy to say I am not put

* Non enim te puto Græcos ludos desiderare: præsertim quum Græcos ita non ames, ut ne ad villam quidem tuam viâ Græcâ ire soleas.—CICERO; *Ep. ad Div.* vii. 1.

to the test. Magnetism, galvanism, electricity, are "one form of many names."* Without magnetism we should never have discovered America; to which we are indebted for nothing but evil; diseases in the worst forms that can afflict humanity, and slavery in the worst form in which slavery can exist. The Old World had the sugar-cane and the cotton-plant, though it did not so misuse them. Then, what good have we got from America? What good of any kind, from the whole continent and its islands, from the Esquimaux to Patagonia?

Mr. Gryll.—Newfoundland salt-fish, doctor.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—That is something, but it does not turn the scale.

Mr. Gryll.—If they have given us no good, we have given them none.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—We have given them wine and classical literature; but I am afraid Bacchus and Minerva have equally—

Scattered their bounty upon barren ground.

On the other hand, we have given the red men rum, which has been the chief instrument of their perdition. On the whole, our intercourse with America has been little else than an interchange of vices and diseases.

Lord Curryfin.—Do you count it nothing to have substituted civilized for savage men?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Civilized. The word requires definition. But looking into futurity, it seems to me that the ultimate tendency of the change is to substitute the worse for the better race; the Negro for the Red Indian. The Red Indian will not work for a master. No ill-usage will make him. Herein he is the noblest specimen of humanity that ever walked the earth. Therefore, the white man exterminates his race. But the time will come, when by mere force of numbers, the black race will predominate, and exterminate the white. And thus the worse race will be substituted for the better, even as it is in St. Domingo, where the Negro has taken the place of the Caraib. The change is clearly for the worse.

Lord Curryfin.—You imply that in the meantime the white race is better than the red.

* Πολλῶν ὀνομάτων μορφὴ μία.—ÆSCHYLUS: *Prometheus.*

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I leave that as an open question. But I hold, as some have done before me, that the human mind degenerates in America, and that the superiority, such as it is, of the white race, is only kept up by intercourse with Europe. Look at the atrocities in their ships. Look at their Congress and their Courts of Justice; debaters in the first; suitors, even advocates, sometimes judges, in the second, settling their arguments with pistol and dagger. Look at their extensions of slavery, and their revivals of the slave-trade, now covertly, soon to be openly. If it were possible that the two worlds could be absolutely dissevered for a century, I think a new Columbus would find nothing in America but savages.

Lord Curryfin.—You look at America, doctor, through your hatred of slavery. You must remember that we introduced it when they were our colonists. It is not so easily got rid of. Its abolition by France exterminated the white race in St. Domingo, as the white race had exterminated the red. Its abolition by England ruined our West Indian Colonies.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Yes, in conjunction with the direct encouragement of foreign slave labour, given by our friends of liberty under the pretext of free trade. It is a mockery to keep up a squadron for suppressing the slave-trade on the one hand, while, on the other hand, we encourage it to an extent that counteracts in a tenfold degree the apparent power of suppression. It is a clear case of false pretension.

Mr. Gryll.—You know, doctor, the Old World had slavery throughout its entire extent; under the Patriarchs, the Greeks, the Romans; everywhere, in short. Cicero thought our island not likely to produce anything worth having, excepting slaves;* and of those none skilled, as some slaves were, in letters and music, but all utterly destitute of both. And in the Old World the slaves were of the same race with

* Etiam illud jam cognitum est, neque argenti scripulum esse ullum in illâ insulâ, neque ullam spem prædæ, nisi ex mancipiis: ex quibus nullos puto te literis aut musicis eruditos expectare.—CICERO *ad Atticum:* iv. 16.

A hope is expressed by Pomponius Mela, l. iii. c. 6 (he wrote under Claudius), that, by the success of the Roman arms, the island and its savage inhabitants would soon be better known. It is amusing enough to peruse such passages in the midst of London.—GIBBON: c. i.

the masters. The Negroes are an inferior race, not fit, I am afraid, for anything else.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Not fit, perhaps, for anything else belonging to what we call civilized life. Very fit to live on little, and wear nothing, in Africa; where it would have been a blessing to themselves and the rest of the world if they had been left unmolested; if they had had a Friar Bacon to surround their entire continent with a wall of brass.

Mr. Falconer.—I am not sure, doctor, that in many instances, even yet, the white slavery of our factories is not worse than the black slavery of America. We have done much to amend it, and shall do more. Still, much remains to be done.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—And will be done, I hope and believe. The Americans do nothing to amend their system. On the contrary, they do all they can to make bad worse. Whatever excuse there may be for maintaining slavery where it exists, there can be none for extending it into new territories; none for reviving the African slave-trade. These are the crying sins of America. Our white slavery, so far as it goes, is so far worse, that it is the degradation of a better race. But if it be not redressed, as I trust it will be, it will work out its own retribution. And so it is of all the oppressions that are done under the sun. Though all men but the red men will work for a master, they will not fight for an oppressor in the day of his need. Thus gigantic empires have crumbled into dust at the first touch of an invader's footstep. For petty, as for great oppressions, there is a day of retribution growing out of themselves. It is often long in coming. *Ut sit magna, tamen certe lenta ira Deorum est.** But it comes.

Raro antecedentem scelestum
Deseruit pede Pœna claudo.†

Lord Curryfin.—I will not say, doctor, "I've seen, and sure I ought to know." But I have been in America, and I have found there, what many others will testify, a very numerous class of persons, who hold opinions very like your own: persons who altogether keep aloof from public life, be-

* The anger of the Gods, though great, is slow.

† The foot of Punishment, though lame,
O'ertakes at last preceding Wrong.

cause they consider it abandoned to the rabble; but who are as refined, as enlightened, as full of sympathy for all that tends to justice and liberty, as any whom you may most approve amongst ourselves.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Of that I have no doubt. But I look to public acts and public men.

Lord Curryfin.—I should much like to know what Mr. MacBorrowdale thinks of all this.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Troth, my lord, I think we have strayed far away from the good company we began with. We have lost sight of Jack of Dover. But the discussion had one bright feature. It did not interfere with, it rather promoted the circulation of the bottle: for every man who spoke pushed it on with as much energy as he spoke with, and those who were silent swallowed the wine and the opinion together, as if they relished them both.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—So far, discussion may find favour. In my own experience I have found it very absorbent of claret. But I do not think it otherwise an incongruity after dinner, provided it be carried on, as our disquisitions have always been, with frankness and good humour. Consider how much instruction has been conveyed to us in the form of conversations at banquet, by Plato and Xenophon and Plutarch. I read nothing with more pleasure than their *Symposia:* to say nothing of Athenæus, whose work is one long banquet.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Nay, I do not object to conversation on any subject. I object to after-dinner lectures. I have had some unfortunate experiences. I have found what began in conversation end in a lecture. I have, on different occasions, met several men, who were in that respect all alike. Once started they never stopped. The rest of the good company, or rather the rest which without them would have been good company, was no company. No one could get in a word. They went on with one unvarying stream of monotonous desolating sound. This makes me tremble when a discussion begins. I sit in fear of a lecture.

Lord Curryfin.—Well, you and I have lectured, but never after dinner. We do it when we have promised it, and when those who are present expect it. After dinner, I agree with you, it is the most doleful blight that can fall on human enjoyment.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—I will give you one or two examples

of these postprandial inflictions. One was a great Indian reformer. He did not open his mouth till he had had about a bottle and a half of wine. Then he burst on us with a declamation on all that was wrong in India, and its remedy. He began in the Punjaub, travelled to Calcutta, went southward, got into the Temple of Juggernaut, went southward again, and after holding forth for more than an hour, paused for a moment. The man who sate next him attempted to speak: but the orator clapped him on the arm, and said: "Excuse me: now I come to Madras." On which his neighbour jumped up and vanished. Another went on in the same way about currency. His first hour's talking carried him just through the Restriction Act of ninety-seven. As we had then more than half a century before us, I took my departure. But these were two whom topography and chronology would have brought to a close. The bore of all bores was the third. His subject had no beginning, middle, nor end. It was education. Never was such a journey through the desert of mind: the Great Sahara of intellect. The very recollection makes me thirsty.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—If all the nonsense which, in the last quarter of a century, has been talked on all other subjects were thrown into one scale, and all that has been talked on the subject of education alone were thrown into the other, I think the latter would preponderate.

Lord Curryfin.—We have had through the whole period some fine specimens of nonsense on other subjects: for instance, with a single exception, political economy.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—I understand your lordship's politeness as excepting the present company. You need not except me. I am "free to confess," as they say "in another place," that I have talked a great deal of nonsense on that subject myself.

Lord Curryfin.—Then, we have had latterly a mighty mass on the purification of the Thames.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Allowing full weight to the two last-named ingredients, they are not more than a counterpoise to Competitive Examination, which is also a recent exotic belonging to education.

Lord Curryfin.—Patronage, it used to be alleged, considered only the fitness of the place for the man, not the fitness of the man for the place. It was desirable to reverse this.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—True: but—

Dum vitant stulti vitium, in contraria currunt.*

Questions which can only be answered by the parrotings of a memory, crammed to disease with all sorts of heterogeneous diet, can form no test of genius, taste, judgment, or natural capacity. Competitive Examination takes for its *norma:* "It is better to learn many things ill than one thing well;" or rather: "It is better to learn to gabble about everything than to understand anything." This is not the way to discover the wood of which Mercuries are made. I have been told that this precious scheme has been borrowed from China: a pretty fountain-head for moral and political improvement: and if so, I may say, after Petronius: "This windy and monstrous loquacity has lately found its way to us from Asia, and like a pestilential star has blighted the minds of youth otherwise rising to greatness."†

Lord Curryfin.—There is something to be said on behalf of applying the same tests, addressing the same questions, to everybody.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I shall be glad to hear what can be said on that behalf.

Lord Curryfin (after a pause).—"Mass," as the second grave-digger says in *Hamlet*, "I cannot tell."

A chorus of laughter dissolved the sitting.

* When fools would from one vice take flight,
They rush into its opposite.
HOR. *Sat.* i. 2, 24.

† Nuper ventosa isthæc et enormis loquacitas Athenas ex Asiâ commigravit, animosque juvenum, ad magna surgentes, veluti pestilenti quodam sidere afflavit.

CHAPTER XX.

ALGERNON AND MORGANA.—OPPORTUNITY AND REPENTANCE.—THE FOREST IN WINTER.

Les violences qu'on se fait pour s'empêcher d'aimer sont souvent plus cruelles que les rigueurs de ce qu'on aime.—LA ROCHEFOUCAULD.

THE winter set in early. December began with intense frost. Mr. Falconer, one afternoon, entering the inner drawing-room, found Miss Gryll alone. She was reading, and on the entrance of her visitor, laid down her book. He hoped he had not interrupted her in an agreeable occupation. "To observe romantic method," we shall give what passed between them with the Christian names of the speakers.

Morgana.—I am only reading what I have often read before, *Orlando Innamorato;* and I was at the moment occupied with a passage about the enchantress from whom my name was borrowed. You are aware that enchantresses are in great favour here.

Algernon.—Circe and Gryllus, and your name, sufficiently show that. And not your name only, but—— I should like to see the passage, and should be still better pleased if you would read it to me.

Morgana.—It is where Orlando, who had left Morgana sleeping by the fountain, returns to seek the enchanted key, by which alone he can liberate his friends.

Il Conte, che d'intrare havea gran voglia,
Subitamente al fonte ritornava:
Quivi trovò Morgana, che con gioglia
Danzava intorno, e danzando cantava.
Nè più leggier si move al vento foglia
Come ella sanza sosta si voltava,
Mirando hora a la terra ed hora al sole;
Ed al suo canto usava tal parole:

"Qualonque cerca al mondo haver thesoro,
Over diletto, o segue onore e stato,
Ponga la mano a questa chioma d'oro,
Ch'io porto in fronte, e quel farò beato.

Ma quando ha il destro a far cotal lavoro,
Non prenda indugio, che'l tempo passato
Più non ritorna, e non si trova mai ;
Ed io mi volto, e lui lascio con guai."

Così cantava d'intorno girando
La bella Fata a quella fresca fonte ;
Ma come gionto vide il Conte Orlando,
Subitamente rivoltò la fronte :
Il prato e la fontana abbandonando,
Prese il viaggio suo verso d'un monte,
Qual chiudea la valletta picciolina :
Quivi fuggendo Morgana cammina.*

* BOJARDO : l. ii. c. 8. *Ed. Vinegia ;* 1544.

With earnest wish to pass the enchanted gate,
Orlando to the fount again advanced,
And found Morgana, all with joy elate,
Dancing around, and singing as she danced.
As lightly moved and twirled the lovely Fate
As to the breeze the lightest foliage glanced,
With looks alternate to the earth and sky,
She thus gave out her words of witchery :

"Let him, who seeks unbounded wealth to hold,
Or joy, or honour, or terrestrial state,
Seize with his hand this lock of purest gold,
That crowns my brow, and blest shall be his fate.
But when time serves, behoves him to be bold,
Nor even a moment's pause interpolate :
The chance, once lost, he never finds again :
I turn, and leave him to lament in vain."

Thus sang the lovely Fate in bowery shade,
Circling in joy around the crystal fount ;
But when within the solitary glade
Glittered the armour of the approaching Count,
She sprang upon her feet, as one dismayed,
And took her way towards a lofty mount,
That rose the valley's narrow length to bound :
Thither Morgana sped along the ground.

I have translated *Fata*, Fate. It is usually translated Fairy. But the idea differs essentially from ours of a fairy. Amongst other things there is no *Fato*, no Oberon to the Titania. It does not, indeed, correspond with our usual idea of Fate, but it is more easily distinguished as a class ; for our old acquaintances the Fates are an inseparable three. The Italian *Fata* is independent of her sisters. They are enchantresses ; but they differ from other enchantresses in being immortal. They are beautiful, too, and their beauty is immortal : always in Bojardo. He would not have turned Alcina into an old woman, as Ariosto did ; which I must always consider a dreadful blemish on the many charms of the *Orlando Furioso*.

Algernon.—I remember the passage well. The beautiful *Fata*, dancing and singing by the fountain, presents a delightful picture.

Morgana.—Then, you know, Orlando, who had missed his opportunity of seizing the golden forelock while she was sleeping, pursues her a long while in vain through rocky deserts, *La Penitenza* following him with a scourge. The same idea was afterwards happily worked out by Machiavelli in his *Capitolo dell' Occasione.*

Algernon.—You are fond of Italian literature? You read the language beautifully. I observe you have read from the original poem, and not from Berni's *rifacciamento.*

Morgana.—I prefer the original. It is more simple, and more in earnest. Berni's playfulness is very pleasant, and his exordiums are charming; and in many instances he has improved the poetry. Still, I think he has less than the original of what are to me the great charms of poetry, truth and simplicity. Even the greater antiquity of style has its peculiar appropriateness to the subject. And Bojardo seems to have more faith in his narrative than Berni. I go on with him with ready credulity, where Berni's pleasantry interposes a doubt.

Algernon.—You think that in narratives, however wild and romantic, the poet should write as if he fully believed in the truth of his own story.

Morgana.—I do; and I think so in reference to all narratives, not to poetry only. What a dry skeleton is the history of the early ages of Rome, told by one who believes nothing that the Romans believed. Religion pervades every step of the early Roman history; and in a great degree down at least to the Empire; but, because their religion is not our religion, we pass over the supernatural part of the matter in silence, or advert to it in a spirit of contemptuous incredulity. We do not give it its proper place, nor present it in its proper colours, as a cause in the production of great effects. Therefore, I like to read Livy, and I do not like to read Niebuhr.

Algernon.—May I ask if you read Latin?

Morgana.—I do; sufficiently to derive great pleasure from it. Perhaps, after this confession, you will not wonder that I am a spinster.

Algernon.—So far, that I think it would tend to make you fastidious in your choice. Not that you would be less sought by

any who would be worthy your attention. For I am told you have had many suitors, and have rejected them all in succession. And have you not still many, and among them one very devoted lover, who would bring you title as well as fortune? A very amiable person, too, though not without a comic side to his character.

Morgana.—I do not well know. He so far differs from all my preceding suitors that in every one of them I found the presence of some quality that displeased me, or the absence of some which would have pleased me: the want, in the one way or the other, of that entire congeniality in taste and feeling which I think essential to happiness in marriage. He has so strong a desire of pleasing, and such power of acquisition and assimilation, that I think a woman truly attached to him might mould him to her mind. Still, I can scarcely tell why, he does not complete my idealities. They say, Love is his own avenger; and perhaps I shall be punished by finding my idealities realized in one who will not care for me.

Algernon.—I take that to be impossible.

Morgana blushed, held down her head, and made no reply. Algernon looked at her with silent admiration. A new light seemed to break in on him. Though he had had so many opportunities of forming a judgment on the point, it seemed to strike him for the first time with irresistible conviction that he had never before heard such a sweet voice, nor seen such an expressive and intelligent countenance. And in this way they continued like two figures in a *tableau vivant*, till the entrance of other parties broke the spell which had thus fixed them in their positions.

A few minutes more, and their destinies might have been irrevocably fixed. But the interruption gave Mr. Falconer the opportunity of returning again to his Tower, to consider, in the presence of the seven sisters, whether he should not be in the position of a Roman, who was reduced to the dilemma of migrating without his household deities, or of suffering his local deities to migrate without him; and whether he could sit comfortably on either of the horns of this dilemma. He felt that he could not. On the other hand, could he bear to see the fascinating Morgana metamorphosed into Lady Curryfin? The time had been when he had half wished it, as the means of restoring him to liberty. He felt now, that when in her society he could not bear the idea;

but he still thought that in the midst of his domestic deities he might become reconciled to it.

He did not care for horses, nor keep any for his own use. But as time and weather were not always favourable to walking, he had provided for himself a comfortable travelling-chariot, without a box to intercept the view, in which, with post-horses after the fashion of the olden time, he performed occasional migrations. He found this vehicle of great use in moving to and fro between the Grange and the Tower; for then, with all his philosophy, Impatience was always his companion: Impatience on his way to the Grange, to pass into the full attraction of the powerful spell by which he was drawn like the fated ship to the magnetic rock in the *Arabian Nights:* Impatience on his way to the Tower, to find himself again in the "Regions mild of pure and serene air," in which the seven sisters seemed to dwell, like Milton's ethereal spirits "Before the starry threshold of Jove's court." Here was everything to soothe, nothing to irritate or disturb him: nothing on the spot: but it was with him, as it is with many, perhaps with all: the two great enemies of tranquillity, Hope and Remembrance, would still intrude: not like a bubble and a spectre, as in the beautiful lines of Coleridge:* for the remembrance of Morgana was not a spectre, and the hope of her love, which he cherished in spite of himself, was not a bubble: but their forces were not less disturbing, even in the presence of his earliest and most long and deeply cherished associations.

He did not allow his impatience to require that the horses should be put to extraordinary speed. He found something tranquillizing in the movement of a postilion in a smart jacket, vibrating on one horse upwards and downwards, with one invariable regulated motion like the cross-head of a side-lever steam-engine, and holding the whip quietly arched over the neck of the other. The mechanical monotony of the

* Who late and lingering seeks thy shrine,
On him but seldom, Power divine,
Thy spirit rests. Satiety,
And sloth, poor counterfeits of thee,
Mock the tired worldling. Idle Hope,
And dire Remembrance, interlope,
And vex the feverish slumbers of the mind:
The bubble floats before: the spectre stalks behind.
COLERIDGE'S *Ode to Tranquillity.*

movement seemed less in contrast than in harmony with the profound stillness of the wintry forest: the leafless branches heavy with rime frost and glittering in the sun: the deep repose of nature, broken now and then by the traversing of deer, or the flight of wild birds: highest and loudest among them the long lines of rooks: but for the greater part of the way one long deep silence, undisturbed but by the rolling of the wheels and the iron tinkling of the hoofs on the frozen ground. By degrees he fell into a reverie, and meditated on his last dialogue with Morgana.

"It is a curious coincidence," he thought, "that she should have been dwelling in a passage, in which her namesake enchantress inflicted punishment on Orlando for having lost his opportunity. Did she associate Morgana with herself and Orlando with me? Did she intend a graceful hint to me not to lose *my* opportunity? I seemed in a fair way to seize the golden forelock, if we had not been interrupted. Do I regret that I did not? That is just what I cannot determine. Yet it would be more fitting, that whatever I may do should be done calmly, deliberately, philosophically, than suddenly, passionately, impulsively. One thing is clear to me. It is now or never: this or none. The world does not contain a second Morgana, at least not of mortal race. Well: the opportunity will return. So far, I am not in the predicament in which we left Orlando. I may yet ward off the scourge of *La Penitenza.*"

But his arrival at home, and the sight of the seven sisters, who had all come to the hall-door to greet him, turned his thoughts for awhile into another channel.

He dined at his usual hour, and his two Hebes alternately filled his glass with Madeira. After which the sisters played and sang to him in the drawing-room; and when he had retired to his chamber, had looked on the many portraitures of his Virgin Saint, and had thought by how many charms of life he was surrounded, he composed himself to rest with the reflection: "I am here like Rasselas in the Happy Valley: and I can now fully appreciate the force of that beautiful chapter: *The wants of him who wants nothing.*"

CHAPTER XXI.

SKATING.—PAS DE DEUX ON THE ICE.—CONGENIALITY.—FLINTS AMONG BONES.

Ubi lepos, joci, risus, ebrietas decent,
Gratiæ, decor, hilaritas, atque delectatio,
Qui quærit alia his, malum videtur quærere.
PLAUTUS: *In Pseudolo.*

Where sport, mirth, wine, joy, grace, conspire to please,
He seeks but ill who seeks aught else than these.

THE frost continued. The lake was covered over with solid ice. This became the chief scene of afternoon amusement, and Lord Curryfin carried off the honours of the skating. In the dead of the night, there came across his memory a ridiculous stave:

There's Mr. Tait, he cuts an eight,
He cannot cut a nine:

and he determined on trying if he could not outdo Mr. Tait. He thought it would be best to try his experiment without witnesses: and having more than an hour's daylight before breakfast, he devoted that portion of the morning to his purpose. But cutting a nine by itself baffled his skill, and treated him to two or three tumbles, which, however, did not abate his ardour. At length he bethought him of cutting a nine between two eights, and by shifting his feet rapidly at the points of difficulty, striking in and out of the nine to and from the eights on each side. In this he succeeded, and exhibiting his achievement in the afternoon, adorned the surface of the ice with successions of 898, till they amounted to as many sextillions, with their homogeneous sequences. He then enclosed the line with an oval, and returned to the bank through an admiring circle, who, if they had been as numerous as the spectators to the Olympic games, would have greeted him with as loud shouts of triumph as saluted Epharmostus of Opus.*

Among the spectators on the bank were Miss Niphet and Mr. MacBorrowdale, standing side by side. While Lord

* Διήρχετο κύκλον ὅσσᾳ βοᾷ.—PIND. *Olymp.* ix.
With what a clamour he passed through the circle.

Curryfin was cutting his sextillions, Mr. MacBorrowdale said: "There is a young gentleman who is capable of anything, and who would shine in any pursuit, if he would keep to it. He shines as it is, in almost everything he takes in hand in private society: there is genius even in his failures, as in the case of the theatrical vases; but the world is a field of strong competition, and affords eminence to few in any sphere of exertion, and to those few rarely but in one."

Miss Niphet.—Before I knew him, I never heard of him but as a lecturer on Fish: and to that he seems to limit his public ambition. In private life, his chief aim seems to be that of pleasing his company. Of course, you do not attach much value to his present pursuit. You see no utility in it.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—On the contrary, I see great utility in it. I am for a healthy mind in a healthy body: the first can scarcely be without the last, and the last can scarcely be without good exercise in pure air. In this way, there is nothing better than skating. I should be very glad to cut eights and nines with his lordship: but the only figure I should cut, would be that of as many feet as would measure my own length on the ice.

Lord Curryfin, on his return to land, thought it his duty first to accost Miss Gryll, who was looking on by the side of Miss Ilex. He asked her if she ever skated. She answered in the negative. "I have tried it," she said, "but unsuccessfully. I admire it extremely, and regret my inability to participate in it." He then went up to Miss Niphet, and asked her the same question. She answered: "I have skated often in our grounds at home." "Then why not now?" he asked. She answered: "I have never done it before so many witnesses." "But what is the objection?" he asked. "None that I know of," she answered. "Then," he said, "as I have done or left undone some things to please you, will you do this one thing to please me?" "Certainly," she replied: adding to herself: "I will do anything in my power to please you."

She equipped herself expeditiously, and started before he was well aware. She was half round the lake before he came up with her. She then took a second start, and completed the circle before he came up with her [illegible] she was an Atalanta on ice as on [illegible] her side, slipped her arm thro[illegible]

gether on a second round, which they completed arm-in-arm. By this time the blush-rose bloom which had so charmed him on a former occasion again mantled on her cheeks, though from a different cause, for it was now only the glow of healthful exercise; but he could not help exclaiming, "I now see why and with what tints the Athenians coloured their statues."

"Is it clear," she asked, "that they did so?"

"I have doubted it before," he answered, "but I am now certain that they did."

In the meantime, Miss Gryll, Miss Ilex, and the Reverend Doctor Opimian had been watching their movements from the bank.

Miss Ilex.—I have seen much graceful motion in dancing, in private society and on the Italian stage; and some in skating before to-day; but anything so graceful as that double-gliding over the ice by those two remarkably handsome young persons, I certainly never saw before.

Miss Gryll.—Lord Curryfin is unquestionably handsome, and Miss Niphet, especially with that glow on her cheeks, is as beautiful a young woman as imagination can paint. They move as if impelled by a single will. It is impossible not to admire them both.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian—They remind me of the mythological fiction, that Jupiter made men and women in pairs, like the Siamese twins; but in this way they grew so powerful and presumptuous, that he cut them in two; and now the main business of each half is to look for the other; which is very rarely found, and hence so few marriages are happy. Here the two true halves seem to have met.

The doctor looked at Miss Gryll, to see what impression this remark might make on her. He concluded that, if she thought seriously of Lord Curryfin, she would show some symptom of jealousy of Miss Niphet; but she did not. She merely said,

"I quite agree with you, doctor. There is evidently great congeniality between them, even in their respective touches of eccentricity."

But the doctor's remark had suggested to her what she herself had failed to observe; Lord Curryfin's subsidence from ardour into deference, in his pursuit of herself. She had been so undividedly "the cynosure of neighbouring

eyes," that she could scarcely believe in the possibility of even temporary eclipse. Her first impulse was to resign him to her young friend. But then appearances might be deceitful. Her own indifference might have turned his attentions into another channel, without his heart being turned with them. She had seen nothing to show that Miss Niphet's feelings were deeply engaged in the question. She was not a coquet; but she would still feel it as a mortification that her hitherto unquestioned supremacy should be passing from her. She had felt all along, that there was one cause which would lead her to a decided rejection of Lord Curryfin. But her Orlando had not seized the golden forelock; perhaps he never would. After having seemed on the point of doing so, he had disappeared, and not returned. He was now again within the links of the sevenfold chain, which had bound him from his earliest days. She herself, too, had had, perhaps had still, the chance of the golden forelock in another quarter. Might she not subject her after-life to repentance, if her first hope should fail her, when the second had been irrevocably thrown away? The more she contemplated the sacrifice, the greater it appeared. Possibly doubt had given preponderance to her thoughts of Mr. Falconer; and certainly had caused them to repose in the case of Lord Curryfin; but when doubt was thrown into the latter scale also, the balance became more even. She would still give him his liberty, if she believed that he wished it; for then her pride would settle the question; but she must have more conclusive evidence on the point than the Reverend Doctor's metaphorical deduction from a mythological fiction.

In the evening, while the party in the drawing-room were amusing themselves in various ways, Mr. MacBorrowdale laid a drawing on the table, and said, "Doctor, what should you take that to represent?"

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—An unformed lump of I know not what.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Not unformed. It is a flint formation of a very peculiar kind.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Very peculiar, certainly. Who on earth can have amused himself with drawing a misshapen flint? There must be some riddle in it; some ænigma, as insoluble to me as *Aelia Laelia Crispis.**

* This ænigma has been the subject of many learned disquisitions.

Lord Curryfin, and others of the party, were successively asked their opinions. One of the young ladies guessed it to be the petrifaction of an antediluvian muscle. Lord Curryfin said petrifactions were often siliceous, but never pure silex; which this purported to be. It gave him the idea of an ass's head; which, however, could not by any process have been turned into flint.

Conjecture being exhausted, Mr. MacBorrowdale said, "It is a thing they call a Celt. The ass's head is somewhat germane to the matter. The Artium Societatis Syndicus Et Socii have determined that it is a weapon of war, evidently of human manufacture. It has been found, with many others like it, among bones of mammoths and other extinct animals, and is therefore held to prove that men and mammoths were contemporaries."

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—A weapon of war? Had it a handle? Is there a hole for a handle?

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—That does not appear.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—These flints, and no other traces of men, among the bones of mammoths?

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—None whatever.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—What do the Artium Societatis Syndicus Et Socii suppose to have become of the men who produced these demonstrations of high aboriginal art?

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—They think these finished specimens of skill in the art of chipping prove that the human race is of greater antiquity than has been previously supposed; and the fact, that there is no other relic to prove the position, they consider of no moment whatever.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Ha! ha! ha! This beats the Elephant in the Moon,* which turned out to be a mouse in a telescope. But I can help them to an explanation of what became of these primæval men-of-arms. They were an ethereal race, and evaporated.

The reader, who is unacquainted with it, may find it under the article "Ænigma" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica;* and probably in every other encyclopædia.

* See Butler's poem, with that title, in his *Miscellaneous Works.*

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SEVEN AGAINST THEBES.—A SOLILOQUY ON CHRISTMAS.

Over the mountains,
And over the waves;
Under the fountains,
And under the graves;
Under floods that are deepest,
Which Neptune obey;
Over rocks that are steepest,
Love will find out the way.
Old Song in PERCY'S *Reliques*.

HARRY HEDGEROW had volunteered to be Mr. Falconer's Mercury during his absences from the Tower, and to convey to him letters and any communications which the sisters might have to make. Riding at a good trot, on a horse more distinguished for strength than grace, he found the shortest days long enough for the purpose of going and returning, with an ample interval for the refreshment of himself and his horse. While discussing beef and ale in the servants' hall, he heard a good deal of the family news, and many comments on the visitors. From these he collected, that there were several young gentlemen especially remarkable for their attention to the young lady of the mansion: that among them were two who were more in her good graces than the others: that one of these was the young gentleman who lived in the Duke's Folly, and who was evidently the favourite: and that the other was a young lord, who was the life and soul of the company, but who seemed to be very much taken with another young lady, who had, at the risk of her own life, jumped into the water and picked him out, when he was nearly being drowned. This story had lost nothing in travelling. Harry, deducing from all this the conclusion most favourable to his own wishes, determined to take some steps for the advancement of his own love-suit, especially as he had obtained some allies, who were willing to march with him to conquest, like the Seven against Thebes.

The Reverend Doctor Opimian had finished his breakfast, and had just sat down in his library, when he was informed that some young men wished to see him. The doctor was

always accessible, and the visitors were introduced. He recognized his friend Harry Hedgerow, who was accompanied by six others. After respectful salutations on their part, and benevolent acceptance on his, Harry, as the only one previously known to the doctor, became spokesman for the deputation.

Harry Hedgerow.—You see, sir, you gave me some comfort when I was breaking my heart; and now we are told that the young gentleman at the Folly is going to be married.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Indeed! you are better informed than I am.

Harry Hedgerow.—Why, it's in everybody's mouth. He passes half his time at Squire Gryll's, and they say it's all for the sake of the young lady that's there: she that was some days at the Folly; that I carried in, when she was hurt in the great storm. I am sure I hope it be true. For you said, if he married, and suitable parties proposed for her sisters, Miss Dorothy might listen to me. I have lived in the hope of that ever since. And here are six suitable parties to propose for her six sisters. That is the long and the short of it.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—The short of it, at any rate. You speak like a Spartan. You come to the point at once. But why do you come to me? I have no control over the fair damsels.

Harry Hedgerow.—Why, no, sir; but you are the greatest friend of the young gentleman. And if you could just say a word for us to him, you see, sir.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I see seven notes in the key of A minor, proposing to sound in harmony with the seven notes of the octave above; but I really do not see what I can do in the matter.

Harry Hedgerow.—Indeed, sir, if you could only ask the young gentleman if he would object to our proposing to the young ladies.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Why not propose to them yourselves? You seem to be all creditable young men.

Harry Hedgerow.—I have proposed to Miss Dorothy, you know, and she would not have me; and the rest are afraid. We are all something to do with the land and the woods; farmers, and foresters, and nurserymen, and all that. And we have all opened our hearts to one another. They don't

pretend to look above us; but it seems somehow as if they did, and couldn't help it. They are so like young ladies. They daze us, like. Why, if they'd have us, they'd be all in reach of one another. Fancy what a family party there'd be at Christmas. We just want a good friend to put a good foot foremost for us; and if the young gentleman does marry, perhaps they may better themselves by doing likewise.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—And so you seven young friends have each a different favourite among the seven sisters?

Harry Hedgerow.—Why, that's the beauty of it.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—The beauty of it? Perhaps it is. I suppose there is an agistor* among you.

Harry Hedgerow (after looking at his companions, who all shook their heads).—I am afraid not. Ought there to be? We don't know what it means.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I thought that among so many foresters there might be an agistor. But it is not indispensable. Well, if the young gentleman is going to be married, he will tell me of it. And when he does tell me, I will tell him of you. Have patience. It may all come right.

Harry Hedgerow.—Thank ye, sir. Thank ye, sir, kindly.

Which being echoed in chorus by the other six, they took their departure, much marvelling what the reverend doctor could mean by an agistor.

"Upon my word," said the doctor to himself, "a very good-looking, respectable set of young men. I do not know what the others may have to say for themselves. They behaved like a Greek chorus. They left their share of the dialogue to the coryphæus. He acquitted himself well, more like a Spartan than an Athenian, but none the worse for that. Brevity, in this case, is better than rhetoric. I really like that youth. How his imagination dwells on the family party at Christmas. When I first saw him, he was fancying how the presence of Miss Dorothy would gladden his father's heart at that season. Now he enlarges the circle, but it is still the same predominant idea. He has lost his mother. She must have been a good woman, and his early home must

* An agistor was a forest officer who superintended the taking in of strange cattle to board and lodge, and accounted for the profit to the sovereign. I have read the word, but never heard it. I am inclined to think that in modern times the duty was carried on under another name, or merged in the duties of another office.

have been a happy one. The Christmas hearth would not be so uppermost in his thoughts if it had been otherwise. This speaks well for him and his. I myself think much of Christmas and all its associations. I always dine at home on Christmas-day, and measure the steps of my children's heads on the wall, and see how much higher each of them has risen since the same time last year, in the scale of physical life. There are many poetical charms in the heraldings of Christmas. The halcyon builds its nest on the tranquil sea. 'The bird of dawning singeth all night long.' I have never verified either of these poetical facts. I am willing to take them for granted. I like the idea of the Yule-log, the enormous block of wood carefully selected long before, and preserved where it would be thoroughly dry, which burned on the old-fashioned hearth. It would not suit the stoves of our modern saloons. We could not burn it in our kitchens, where a small fire in the midst of a mass of black iron, roasts, and bakes, and boils, and steams, and broils, and fries, by a complicated apparatus which, whatever may be its other virtues, leaves no space for a Christmas fire. I like the festoons of holly on the walls and windows; the dance under the mistletoe; the gigantic sausage; the baron of beef; the vast globe of plum-pudding, the true image of the earth, flattened at the poles; the tapping of the old October; the inexhaustible bowl of punch; the life and joy of the old hall, when the squire and his household and his neighbourhood were as one. I like the idea of what has gone, and I can still enjoy the reality of what remains. I have no doubt Harry's father burns the Yule-log, and taps the old October. Perhaps, instead of the beef, he produces a fat pig roasted whole, like Eumaeus, the divine swineherd in the *Odyssey*. How Harry will burn the Yule-log if he can realize this day-dream of himself and his six friends with the seven sisters! I shall make myself acquainted with the position and characters of these young suitors. To be sure, it is not my business, and I ought to recollect the words of Cicero: 'Est enim difficilis cura rerum alienarum: quamquam Terentianus ille Chremes humani nihil a se alienum putat.'* I hold with Chremes too. I am not without hope, from some symptoms I have lately seen, that rumour, in the

* It is a hard matter to take active concern in the affairs of others; although the Chremes of Terence thinks nothing human alien to himself.—*De Officiis:* i. 9.

present case, is in a fair way of being right; and if, with the accordance of the young gentleman as key-note, these two heptachords should harmonize into a double octave, I do not see why I may not take my part as fundamental bass."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE TWO QUADRILLES.—POPE'S OMBRE.—POETICAL TRUTH TO NATURE.—CLEOPATRA.

Ἔγνωκα δ' οὖν . . . . . .
Τοὺς ζῶντας ὥσπερ εἰς πανήγυρίν τινα
Ἀφειμένους ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου καὶ τοῦ σκότους
Εἰς τὴν διατριβὴν εἰς τὸ φῶς τε τοῦθ' ὃ δή
Ὁρῶμεν· ὃς δ' ἂν πλεῖστα γελάσῃ καὶ πίῃ,
Καὶ τῆς Ἀφροδίτης ἀντιλάβηται τὸν χρόνον
Τοῦτον ὃν ἀφεῖται, καὶ τύχῃ γ' ἱράνου τινός
Πανηγυρίσας, ἥδιστ' ἀπῆλθεν οἴκαδε.
ALEXIS: *Tarantini.*

As men who leave their homes for public games,
We leave our native element of darkness
For life's brief light. And who has most of mirth,
And wine, and love, may, like a satisfied guest,
Return, contented, to the night he sprang from.

IN the meantime Mr. Falconer, after staying somewhat longer than usual at home, had returned to the Grange. He found much the same party as he had left: but he observed, or imagined, that Lord Curryfin was much more than previously in favour with Miss Gryll; that she paid him more marked attention, and watched his conduct to Miss Niphet with something more than curiosity.

Amongst the winter evenings' amusements were two forms of quadrille: the old-fashioned game of cards, and the more recently fashionable dance. On these occasions, it was of course a carpet-dance. Now, dancing had never been in Mr. Falconer's line, and though modern dancing, especially in quadrilles, is little more than walking, still in that "little more" there is ample room for grace and elegance of motion. Herein Lord Curryfin outshone all the other young men in the circle. He endeavoured to be as indiscriminating as possible in inviting partners: but it was plain to curious observe-

tion, especially if a spice of jealousy mingled with the curiosity, that his favourite partner was Miss Niphet. When they occasionally danced a polka, the reverend doctor's mythological theory came out in full force. It seemed as if Nature had preordained that they should be inseparable, and the interior conviction of both, that so it ought to be, gave them an accordance of movement that seemed to emanate from the innermost mind. Sometimes, too, they danced the *Minuet de la Cour*. Having once done it, they had been often unanimously requested to repeat it. In this they had no competitors. Miss Gryll confined herself to quadrilles, and Mr. Falconer did not even propose to walk through one with her. When dancing brought into Miss Niphet's cheeks the blush-rose bloom, which had more than once before so charmed Lord Curryfin, it required little penetration to see, through his external decorum, the passionate admiration with which he regarded her. Mr. Falconer remarked it, and, looking round to Miss Gryll, thought he saw the trace of a tear in her eye. It was a questionable glistening: jealousy construed it into a tear. But why should it be there? Was her mind turning to Lord Curryfin? and the more readily because of a newly-perceived obstacle? Had mortified vanity any share in it? No: this was beneath Morgana. Then why was it there? Was it anything like regret that, in respect of the young lord, she too had lost her opportunity? Was he himself blameless in the matter? He had been on the point of declaration, and she had been apparently on the point of acceptance: and instead of following up his advantage, he had been absent longer than usual. This was ill; but in the midst of the contending forces which severally acted on him, how could he make it well? So he sate still, tormenting himself.

In the meantime, Mr. Gryll had got up at a card-table, in the outer, which was the smaller drawing-room, a quadrille-party of his own, consisting of himself, Miss Ilex, the Reverend Dr. Opimian, and Mr. MacBorrowdale.

Mr. Gryll.—This is the only game of cards that ever pleased me. Once it was the great evening charm of the whole nation. Now, when cards are played at all, it has given place to whist, which, in my younger days, was considered a dry, solemn, studious game, played in moody silence, only interrupted by an occasional outbreak of dogmatism and

ill-humour. Quadrille is not so absorbing but that we may talk and laugh over it, and yet is quite as interesting as anything of the kind has need to be.

Miss Ilex.—I delight in quadrille. I am old enough to remember when, in mixed society in the country, it was played every evening by some of the party. But *Chaque age a ses plaisirs, son esprit, et ses mœurs.** It is one of the evils of growing old that we do not easily habituate ourselves to changes of custom. The old, who sit still while the young dance and sing, may be permitted to regret the once always accessible cards, which, in their own young days, delighted the old of that generation: and not the old only.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—There are many causes for the diminished attraction of cards in evening society. Late dinners leave little evening. The old time for cards was the interval between tea and supper. Now there is no such interval, except here and there in out-of-the-way places, where, perhaps, quadrille and supper may still flourish, as in the days of Queen Anne. Nothing was more common in country towns and villages, half a century ago, than parties meeting in succession at each other's houses for tea, supper, and quadrille. How popular this game had been, you may judge from Gay's ballad, which represents all classes as absorbed in quadrille.† Then the facility of locomotion dissipates, annihilates neighbourhood. People are not now the fixtures they used to be in their respective localities, finding their amusements within their own limited circle. Half the inhabitants of a country-place are here to-day and gone to-morrow. Even of those who are more what they call settled, the greater portion is less, probably, at home than whisking about the world. Then,

* Boileau.

† For example:

When patients lie in piteous case,
  In comes the apothecary,
And to the doctor cries, "Alas!
  Non debes quadrillare."
The patient dies without a pill:
For why? The doctor's at quadrille.

Should France and Spain again grow loud,
  The Muscovite grow louder,
Britain, to curb her neighbours proud,
  Would want both ball and powder;
Must want both sword and gun to kill;
For why? The general's at quadrille.

again, where cards are played at all, whist is more consentaneous to modern solemnity: there is more wiseacre-ism about it: in the same manner that this other sort of quadrille, in which people walk to and from one another with faces of exemplary gravity, has taken the place of the old-fashioned country-dance. "The merry dance I dearly love" would never suggest the idea of a quadrille, any more than "merry England" would call up any image not drawn from ancient ballads and the old English drama.

Mr. Gryll.—Well, doctor, I intend to have a ball at Christmas, in which all modes of dancing shall have fair play, but country-dances shall have their full share.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I rejoice in the prospect. I shall be glad to see the young dancing as if they were young.

Miss Ilex.—The variety of the game called tredrille—the Ombre of Pope's *Rape of the Lock*—is a pleasant game for three. Pope had many opportunities of seeing it played, yet he has not described it correctly: and I do not know that this has been observed.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Indeed, I never observed it. I shall be glad to know how it is so.

Miss Ilex.—Quadrille is played with forty cards: tredrille usually with thirty: sometimes, as in Pope's Ombre, with twenty-seven. In forty cards, the number of trumps is eleven in the black suits, twelve in the red:* in thirty, nine in all suits alike.† In twenty-seven, they cannot be more than nine in one suit, and eight in the other three. In Pope's Ombre, spades are trumps, and the number is eleven: the number which they would be if the cards were forty. If you follow his description carefully, you will find it to be so.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Why, then, we can only say, as a great philosopher said on another occasion: The description is sufficient "to impose on the degree of attention with which poetry is read."‡

Miss Ilex.—It is a pity it should be so. Truth to nature

* Nine cards in the black, and ten in the red suits, in addition to the aces of spades and clubs, Spadille and Basto, which are trumps in all suits.

† Seven cards in each of the four suits in addition to Spadille and Basto.

‡ DUGALD STEWART, in the *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, I think; but I quote from memory.

is essential to poetry. Few may perceive an inaccuracy: but to those who do, it causes a great diminution, if not a total destruction, of pleasure in perusal. Shakspeare never makes a flower blossom out of season. Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey are true to nature in this and in all other respects: even in their wildest imaginings.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Yet here is a combination by one of our greatest poets, of flowers that never blossom in the same season:—

> Bring the rathe primrose, that forsaken dies,
> The tufted crow-toe and pale jessamine,
> The white pink, and the pansie freakt with jet,
> The glowing violet,
> The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
> With cowslips wan, that hang the pensive head,
> And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
> Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
> And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
> To deck the laureat hearse where Lycid lies.

And at the same time he plucks the berries of the myrtle and the ivy.

Miss Ilex.—Very beautiful, if not true to English seasons: but Milton might have thought himself justified in making this combination in Arcadia. Generally, he is strictly accurate, to a degree that is in itself a beauty. For instance, in his address to the nightingale:—

> Thee, chauntress, oft the woods among,
> I woo to hear thy even-song,
> And missing thee, I walk unseen,
> On the dry smooth-shaven green.

The song of the nightingale ceases about the time that the grass is mown.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—The old Greek poetry is always true to nature, and will bear any degree of critical analysis. I must say I take no pleasure in poetry that will not.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—No poet is truer to nature than Burns, and no one less so than Moore. His imagery is almost always false. Here is a highly-applauded stanza, and very taking at first sight:—

> The night-dew of heaven, though in silence it weeps,
> Shall brighten with verdure the sod where he sleeps;
> And the tear that we shed, though in secret it rolls,
> Shall long keep his memory green in our souls.

But it will not bear analysis. The dew is the cause of the verdure: but the tear is not the cause of the memory: the memory is the cause of the tear.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—There are inaccuracies more offensive to me than even false imagery. Here is one, in a song which I have often heard with displeasure. A young man goes up a mountain, and as he goes higher and higher, he repeats *Excelsior:* but *excelsior* is only taller in the comparison of things on a common basis, not higher, as a detached object in the air. Jack's bean-stalk was *excelsior* the higher it grew: but Jack himself was no more *celsus* at the top than he had been at the bottom.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—I am afraid, doctor, if you look for profound knowledge in popular poetry, you will often be disappointed.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I do not look for profound knowledge. But I do expect that poets should understand what they talk of. Burns was not a scholar, but he was always master of his subject. All the scholarship of the world would not have produced *Tam O'Shanter:* but in the whole of that poem there is not a false image nor a misused word. What do you suppose these lines represent?

> I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,
> One sitting on a crimson scarf unrolled:
> A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold black eyes,
> Brow-bound with burning gold.

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—I should take it to be a description of the Queen of Bambo.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Yet thus one of our most popular poets describes Cleopatra: and one of our most popular artists has illustrated the description by a portrait of a hideous grinning Æthiop. Moore led the way to this perversion by demonstrating that the Ægyptian women must have been beautiful, because they were "the countrywomen of Cleopatra."* Here we have a sort of counter-demonstration, that Cleopatra must have been a fright because she was the countrywoman of the Ægyptians. But Cleopatra was a Greek, the daughter

* De Pauw, the great depreciator of everything Ægyptian, has, on the authority of a passage in Aelian, presumed to affix to the countrywomen of Cleopatra the stigma of complete and unredeemed ugliness.—MOORE'S *Epicurean*, fifth note.

of Ptolemy Auletes and a lady of Pontus. The Ptolemies were Greeks, and whoever will look at their genealogy, their coins, and their medals, will see how carefully they kept their pure Greek blood uncontaminated by African intermixture. Think of this description and this picture applied to one who Dio says—and all antiquity confirms him—was "the most superlatively beautiful of women, splendid to see, and delightful to hear."* For she was eminently accomplished: she spoke many languages with grace and facility. Her mind was as wonderful as her personal beauty. There is not a shadow of intellectual expression in that horrible portrait.

The conversation at the quadrille-table was carried on with occasional pauses, and intermingled with the technicalities of the game.

Miss Gryll continued to alternate between joining in the quadrille dances and resuming her seat by the side of the room, where she was the object of great attention from some young gentlemen, who were glad to find her unattended by either Lord Curryfin or Mr. Falconer. Mr. Falconer continued to sit as if he had been fixed to his seat, like Theseus. The more he reflected on his conduct, in disappearing at that critical point of time and staying away so long, the more he felt that he had been guilty of an unjustifiable, and perhaps unpardonable offence. He noticed with extreme discomposure the swarm of moths, as he called them to himself, who were fluttering in the light of her beauty: he would gladly have put them to flight; and this being out of the question, he would have been contented to take his place among them; but he dared not try the experiment.

Nevertheless, he would have been graciously received. The young lady was not cherishing any feeling of resentment against him. She understood, and made generous allowance for his divided feelings. But his irresolution, if he were left to himself, was likely to be of long duration: and she meditated within herself the means of forcing him to a conclusion one way or the other.

* Περικαλλεστάτη γυναικῶν . . . . . λαμπρά τε ἰδεῖν καὶ ἀκουσθῆναι οὖσα.—Dio, xlii. 34.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PROGRESS OF SYMPATHY.—LOVE'S INJUNCTIONS.—ORLANDO INNAMORATO.

Δέρκεο τὴν νεᾶνιν, δέρκεο, κοῦρε·
Ἔγρεο, μὴ σε φύγῃ πέρδικος ἄγρα.
Ῥόδον ἀνθέων ἀνάσσει·
Ῥόδον ἐν κόραις Μυρίλλα.

ANACREON.

See, youth, the nymph who charms your eyes;
Watch, lest you lose the willing prize.
As queen of flowers the rose you own,
And her of maids the rose alone.

WHILE light, fire, mirth, and music were enlivening the party within the close-drawn curtains, without were moonless night and thickly-falling snow; and the morning opened on one vast expanse of white, mantling alike the lawns and the trees, and weighing down the wide-spreading branches. Lord Curryfin, determined not to be baulked of his skating, sallied forth immediately after breakfast, collected a body of labourers, and swept clear an ample surface of ice, a path to it from the house, and a promenade on the bank. Here he and Miss Niphet amused themselves in the afternoon, in company with a small number of the party, and in the presence of about the usual number of spectators. Mr. Falconer was there, and contented himself with looking on.

Lord Curryfin proposed a reel, Miss Niphet acquiesced, but it was long before they found a third. At length one young gentleman, of the plump and rotund order, volunteered to supply the deficiency, and was soon deposited on the ice, where his partners in the ice-dance would have tumbled over him if they had not anticipated the result, and given him a wide berth. One or two others followed, exhibiting several varieties in the art of falling ungracefully. At last the lord and the lady skated away on as large a circuit as the cleared ice permitted, and as they went he said to her,

"If you were the prize of skating, as Atalanta was of running, I should have good hope to carry you off against all competitors but yourself."

She answered, "Do not disturb my thoughts, or I shall slip."

He said no more, but the words left their impression. They gave him as much encouragement as, under their peculiar circumstances, he could not dare to wish for, or she could venture to intimate.

Mr. Falconer admired their "poetry of motion" as much as all the others had done. It suggested a remark which he would have liked to address to Miss Gryll, but he looked round for her in vain. He returned to the house in the hope that he might find her alone, and take the opportunity of making his peace.

He found her alone, but it seemed that he had no peace to make. She received him with a smile, and held out her hand to him, which he grasped fervently. He fancied that it trembled, but her features were composed. He then sat down at the table, on which the old edition of Bojardo was lying open as before. He said, "You have not been down to the lake to see that wonderful skating." She answered, "I have seen it every day but this. The snow deters me to-day. But it is wonderful. Grace and skill can scarcely go beyond it."

He wanted to apologize for the mode and duration of his departure and absence, but did not know how to begin. She gave him the occasion. She said, "You have been longer absent than usual—from our rehearsals. But we are all tolerably perfect in our parts. But your absence was remarked—by some of the party. You seemed to be especially missed by Lord Curryfin. He asked the reverend doctor every morning if he thought you would return that day."

Algernon.—And what said the doctor?

Morgana.—He usually said, "I hope so." But one morning he said something more specific.

Algernon.—What was it?

Morgana.—I do not know that I ought to tell you.

Algernon.—Oh, pray do.

Morgana.—He said, "The chances are against it." "What are the odds?" said Lord Curryfin. "Seven to one," said the doctor. "It ought not to be so," said Lord Curryfin, "for here is a whole Greek chorus against seven vestals." The doctor said, "I do not estimate the chances by the mere balance of numbers."

Algernon.—He might have said more as to the balance of numbers.

Morgana.—He might have said more, that the seven outweighed the one.

Algernon.—He could not have said that.

Morgana.—It would be much for the one to say that the balance was even.

Algernon.—But how if the absentee himself had been weighed against another in that one's own balance?

Morgana.—One to one promises at least more even weight.

Algernon.—I would not have it so. Pray, forgive me.

Morgana.—Forgive you? For what?

Algernon.—I wish to say, and I do not well know how, without seeming to assume what I have no right to assume, and then I must have double cause to ask your forgiveness.

Morgana.—Shall I imagine what you wish to say, and say, it for you?

Algernon.—You would relieve me infinitely, if you imagine justly.

Morgana.—You may begin by saying with Achilles,

> **My mind is troubled, like a fountain stirred;**
> **And I myself see not the bottom of it.***

Algernon.—I think I do see it more clearly.

Morgana.—You may next say, I live an enchanted life. I have been in danger of breaking the spell; it has once more bound me with sevenfold force; I was in danger of yielding to another attraction; I went a step too far in all but declaring it; I do not know how to make a decent retreat.

Algernon.—Oh! no, no; nothing like that.

Morgana.—Then there is a third thing you may say; but before I say that for you, you must promise to make no reply, not even a monosyllable; and not to revert to the subject for four times seven days. You hesitate.

Algernon.—It seems as if my fate were trembling in the balance.

Morgana.—You must give me the promise I have asked for.

Algernon.—I do give it.

Morgana.—Repeat it then, word for word.

* *Troilus and Cressida*, act iii. scene 3.

Algernon.—To listen to you in silence; not to say a syllable in reply; not to return to the subject for four times seven days.

Morgana.—Then you may say, I have fallen in love; very irrationally—(*he was about to exclaim, but she placed her finger on her lips*)—very irrationally; but I cannot help it. I fear I must yield to my destiny. I will try to free myself from all obstacles; I will, if I can, offer my hand where I have given my heart. And this I will do, if I ever do, at the end of four times seven days: if not then, never.

She placed her finger on her lips again, and immediately left the room, having first pointed to a passage in the open pages of *Orlando Innamorato.* She was gone before he was aware that she was going; but he turned to the book, and read the indicated passage. It was a part of the continuation of Orlando's adventure in the enchanted garden, when himself pursued and scourged by *La Penitenza,* he was pursuing the Fata Morgana over rugged rocks and through briary thickets.

Cosi diceva. Con molta roina
Sempre seguia Morgana il cavalliero:
Fiacca ogni bronco ed ogni mala spina,
Lasciando dietro a se largo il sentiero:
Ed a la Fata molto s' avicina
E già d'averla presa è il suo pensiero:
Ma quel pensiero è ben fallace e vano,
Però che presa anchor scappa di mano.

O quante volte gli dette di piglio,
Hora ne' panni ed hor nella persona:
Ma il vestimento, ch' è bianco e vermiglio,
Ne la speranza presto l'abbandona:
Pur una fiata rivoltando il ciglio,
Come Dio volse e la ventura bona,
Volgendo il viso quella Fata al Conte
Ei ben la prese al zuffo ne la fronte.

Allor cangiosse il tempo, e l'aria scura
Divenne chiara, e il ciel tutto sereno,
E l'aspro monte si fece pianura;
E dove prima fu di spine pieno,
Se coperse de fiori e de verdura:
E'l flagellar dell' altra venne meno;
La qual, con miglior viso che non suole,
Verso del Conte usava tal parole.

Attenti, cavalliero, a quella chioma. . . .*

"She must have anticipated my coming," said the young gentleman to himself. "She had opened the book at this

* BOJARDO, *Orlando Innamorato*, l. ii. c. 9. *Ed. di Vinegia*; 1544.

So spake Repentance. With the speed of fire
Orlando followed where the enchantress fled,
Rending and scattering tree and bush and briar,
And leaving wide the vestige of his tread.
Nearer he drew, with feet that could not tire,
And strong in hope to seize her as she sped.
How vain the hope! Her form he seemed to clasp,
But soon as seized, she vanished from his grasp.

How many times he laid his eager hand
On her bright form, or on her vesture fair;
But her white robes, and their vermilion band,
Deceived his touch, and passed away like air.
But once, as with a half-turned glance she scanned
Her foe—Heaven's will and happy chance were there—
No breath for pausing might the time allow—
He seized the golden forelock of her brow.

Then passed the gloom and tempest from the sky;
The air at once grew calm and all serene;
And where rude thorns had clothed the mountain high,
Was spread a plain, all flowers and vernal green.
Repentance ceased her scourge. Still standing nigh,
With placid looks, in her but rarely seen,
She said: "Beware how yet the prize you lose;
The key of fortune few can wisely use."

In the last stanza of the preceding translation, the seventh line is the essence of the stanza immediately following; the eighth is from a passage several stanzas forward, after Orlando has obtained the key, which was the object of his search:

Che mal se trova alcun sotto la Luna,
Ch' adopri ben la chiave de Fortuna.

The first two books of Bojardo's poem were published in 1486. The first complete edition was published in 1495.

The Venetian edition of 1544, from which I have cited this passage, and the preceding one in chapter XX., is the fifteenth and last complete Italian edition. The original work was superseded by the *Rifacciamenti* of Berni and Domenichi. Mr. Panizzi has rendered a great service to literature in reprinting the original. He collated all accessible editions. *Verum opere in longo fas est obrepere somnum.* He took for his standard, as I think, unfortunately, the Milanese edition of 1539. With all the care he bestowed on his task, he over-

passage, and has left it to say to me for her—Choose between love and repentance. Four times seven days! That is to ensure calm for the Christmas holidays. The term will pass over twelfth night. The lovers of old romance were subjected to a probation of seven years:—

> "Seven long years I served thee, fair one,
> Seven long years my fee was scorn.

"But here, perhaps, the case is reversed. She may have feared a probation of seven years for herself; and not without reason. And what have I to expect if I let the four times seven days pass by? Why, then, I can read in her looks—and they are interpreted in the verses before me—I am assigned to repentance, without the hope of a third opportunity. She is not without a leaning towards Lord

---

looked one fearful perversion in the concluding stanza, which in al editions but the Milanese reads thus:

> Mentre ch'io canto, ahimè Dio redentore,
> Veggio l'Italia tutta a fiamma e a foco,
> Per questi Galli, che con gran furore
> Vengon per disertar non so che loco.
> Però vi lascio in questo vano amore
> Di Fiordespina ardente a poco a poco:
> Un' altra fiata, se mi fia concesso,
> Racconterovi il tutto per espresso.
>
> Even while I sing, ah me, redeeming Heaven!
> I see all Italy in fire and flame,
> Raised by these Gauls, who, by great fury driven,
> Come with destruction for their end and aim.
> The maiden's heart, by vainest passion riven,
> Not now the rudely-broken song may claim;
> Some future day, if Fate auspicious prove,
> Shall end the tale of Fiordespina's love.

The Milanese edition of 1539 was a reprint of that of 1513, in which year the French, under Louis XII., had reconquered Milan. The Milanese editions read *valore* for *furore*.

It was no doubt in deference to the conquerors that the printer of 1513 made this substitution; but it utterly perverts the whole force of the passage. The French, under Charles VIII., invaded Italy in September, 1494, and the horror with which their devastations inspired Bojardo, not only stopped the progress of his poem, but brought his life prematurely to a close. He died in December, 1494. The alteration of this single word changes almost into a compliment an expression of cordial detestation.

Curryfin. She thinks he is passing from her, and on the twenty-ninth day, or perhaps in the meantime, she will try to regain him. Of course she will succeed. What rivalry could stand against her? If her power over him is lessened, it is that she has not chosen to exert it. She has but to will it, and he is again her slave. Twenty-eight days! twenty-eight days of doubt and distraction." And starting up, he walked out into the park, not choosing the swept path, but wading knee-deep in snow where it lay thickest in the glades. He was recalled to himself by sinking up to his shoulders in a hollow. He emerged with some difficulty, and retraced his steps to the house, thinking that, even in the midst of love's most dire perplexities, dry clothes and a good fire are better than a hole in the snow.

CHAPTER XXV.

HARRY AND DOROTHY.

Μνηστῆρες δ' ὁμαδήσον ἀνὰ μέγαρα σκιόεντα.
HOMERUS *in Odysseâ.*

The youthful suitors, playing each his part,
Stirred pleasing tumult in each fair one's heart.
Adapted—not translated.

HARRY HEDGEROW had found means on several occasions of delivering farm and forest produce at the Tower, to introduce his six friends to the sisters, giving all the young men in turn to understand that they must not think of Miss Dorothy; an injunction which, in the ordinary perverse course of events, might have led them all to think of no one else, and produced a complication very disagreeable for their introducer. It was not so, however. "The beauty of it," as Harry said to the reverend doctor, was that each had found a distinct favourite among the seven vestals. They had not, however, gone beyond giving pretty intelligible hints. They had not decidedly ventured to declare or propose. They left it to Harry to prosecute his suit to Miss Dorothy, purposing to step in on the rear of his success. They had severally the satisfaction of being assured by various handsome young gipsies, whose hands they had

crossed with lucky shillings, that each of them was in love with a fair young woman, who was quite as much in love with him, and whom he would certainly marry before twelve months were over. And they went on their way rejoicing.

Now Harry was indefatigable in his suit, which he had unbounded liberty to plead; for Dorothy always listened to him complacently, though without departing from the answer she had originally given, that she and her sisters would not part with each other and their young master.

The sisters had not attached much importance to Mr. Falconer's absences; for on every occasion of his return, the predominant feeling he had seemed to express was that of extreme delight at being once more at home.

One day, while Mr. Falconer was at the Grange, receiving admonition from *Orlando Innamorato*, Harry, having the pleasure to find Dorothy alone, pressed his suit as usual, was listened to as usual, and seemed likely to terminate without being more advanced than usual, except in so far as they both found a progressive pleasure, she in listening, and he in being listened to. There was to both a growing charm in thus "dallying with the innocence of love," and though she always said No with her lips, he began to read Yes in her eyes.

Harry.—Well, but Miss Dorothy, though you and your sisters will not leave your young master, suppose somebody should take him away from you, what would you say then?

Dorothy.—What do you mean, Master Harry?

Harry.—Why, suppose he should get married, Miss Dorothy?

Dorothy.—Married!

Harry.—How should you like to see a fine lady in the Tower, looking at you as much as to say, This is mine?

Dorothy.—I will tell you very candidly, I should not like it at all. But what makes you think of such a thing?

Harry.—You know where he is now?

Dorothy.—At Squire Gryll's, rehearsing a play for Christmas.

Harry.—And Squire Gryll's niece is a great beauty, and a great fortune.

Dorothy.—Squire Gryll's niece was here, and my sisters and myself saw a great deal of her. She is a very nice young lady; but he has seen great beauties and great fortunes be-

fore; he has always been indifferent to the beauties, and he does not care about fortune. I am sure he would not like to change his mode of life.

Harry.—Ah, Miss Dorothy! you don't know what it is to fall in love. It tears a man up by the roots, like a gale of wind.

Dorothy.—Is that your case, Master Harry?

Harry.—Indeed it is, Miss Dorothy. If you didn't speak kindly to me, I do not know what would become of me. But you always speak kindly to me, though you won't have me.

Dorothy.—I never said won't, Master Harry.

Harry.—No, but you always say can't, and that's the same as won't, so long as you don't.

Dorothy.—You are a very good young man, Master Harry. Everybody speaks well of you. And I am really pleased to think you are so partial to me. And if my young master and my sisters were married, and I were disposed to follow their example, I will tell you very truly, you are the only person I should think of, Master Harry.

Master Harry attempted to speak, but he felt choked in the attempt at utterance; and in default of words, he threw himself on his knees before his beloved, and clasped his hands together with a look of passionate imploring, which was rewarded by a benevolent smile. And they did not change their attitude till the entrance of one of the sisters startled them from their sympathetic reverie.

Harry having thus made a successful impression on one of the Theban gates, encouraged his six allies to carry on the siege of the others; for which they had ample opportunity, as the absences of the young gentleman became longer, and the rumours of an attachment between him and Miss Gryll obtained more ready belief.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DOUBTS AND QUESTIONS.

Οὐ χρὴ κακοῖσι θυμὸν ἐπιτρέπειν·
Προκύψομεν γὰρ οὐδέν, ἀσάμενοι,
Ὦ Βακχί· φάρμακον δ' ἄριστον
Οἶνον ἐνεικαμένοις μεθύσθαι.
ALCÆUS.

Bacchis ! 'tis vain to brood on care,
Since grief no remedy supplies ;
Be ours the sparkling bowl to share,
And drown our sorrows as they rise.

MR. FALCONER saw no more of Miss Gryll till the party assembled in the drawing-rooms. She necessarily took the arm of Lord Curryfin for dinner, and it fell to the lot of Mr. Falconer to offer his to Miss Niphet, so that they sat at remote ends of the table, each wishing himself in the other's place ; but Lord Curryfin paid all possible attention to his fair neighbour. Mr. Falconer could see that Miss Gryll's conversation with Lord Curryfin was very animated and joyous : too merry, perhaps, for love : but cordial to a degree that alarmed him. It was, however, clear by the general mirth at the head of the table, that nothing very confidential or sentimental was passing. Still, a young lady who had placed the destiny of her life on a point of brief suspense ought not to be so merry as Miss Gryll evidently was. He said little to Miss Niphet ; and she, with her habit of originating nothing, sat in her normal state of statue-like placidity, listening to the conversation near her. She was on the left hand of Mr. Gryll. Miss Ilex was on his right, and on her right was the Reverend Doctor Opimian. These three kept up an animated dialogue. Mr. MacBorrowdale was in the middle of the table, and amused his two immediate fair neighbours with remarks appertaining to the matter immediately before them, the preparation and arrangement of a good dinner : remarks that would have done honour to Francatelli.

After a while, Mr. Falconer bethought him that he would try to draw out Miss Niphet's opinion on the subject nearest his heart. He said to her : "They are very merry at the head of the table."

Miss Niphet.—I suppose Lord Curryfin is in the vein for amusing his company, and he generally succeeds in his social purposes.

Mr. Falconer.—You lay stress on social, as if you thought him not successful in all his purposes.

Miss Niphet.—Not in all his inventions, for example. But in the promotion of social enjoyment he has few equals. Of course, it must be in congenial society. There is a power of being pleased, as well as a power of pleasing. With Miss Gryll and Lord Curryfin, both meet in both. No wonder that they amuse those around them.

Mr. Falconer.—In whom there must also be a power of being pleased.

Miss Niphet.—Most of the guests here have it. If they had not they would scarcely be here. I have seen some dismal persons, any one of whom would be a kill-joy to a whole company. There are none such in this party. I have also seen a whole company all willing to be pleased, but all mute from not knowing what to say to each other: not knowing how to begin. Lord Curryfin would be a blessing to such a party. He would be the steel to their flint.

Mr. Falconer.—Have you known him long?

Miss Niphet.—Only since I met him here.

Mr. Falconer.—Have you heard that he is a suitor to Miss Gryll?

Miss Niphet.—I have heard so.

Mr. Falconer.—Should you include the probability of his being accepted in your estimate of his social successes?

Miss Niphet.—Love affairs are under influences too capricious for the calculation of probabilities.

Mr. Falconer.—Yet I should be very glad to hear your opinion. You know them both so well.

Miss Niphet.—I am disposed to indulge you, because I think it is not mere curiosity that makes you ask the question. Otherwise I should not be inclined to answer it. I do not think he will ever be the affianced lover of Morgana. Perhaps he might have been if he had persevered as he began. But he has been used to smiling audiences. He did not find the exact reciprocity he looked for. He fancied that it was, or would be, for another. I believe he was right.

Mr. Falconer.—Yet you think he might have succeeded if he had persevered.

Miss Niphet.—I can scarcely think otherwise, seeing how much he has to recommend him.

Mr. Falconer.—But he has not withdrawn.

Miss Niphet.—No, and will not. But she is too high-minded to hold him to a proposal not followed up as it commenced; even if she had not turned her thoughts elsewhere.

Mr. Falconer.—Do you not think she could recall him to his first ardour if she exerted all her fascinations for the purpose?

Miss Niphet.—It may be so. I do not think she will try. (*She added, to herself:*) I do not think she would succeed.

Mr. Falconer did not feel sure she would not try: he thought he saw symptoms of her already doing so. In his opinion Morgana was, and must be, irresistible. But as he had thought his fair neighbour somewhat interested in the subject, he wondered at the apparent impassiveness with which she replied to his questions.

In the meantime he found, as he had often done before, that the more his mind was troubled, the more Madeira he could drink without disordering his head.

CHAPTER XXVII.

LOVE IN MEMORY.

Il faut avoir aimé une fois en sa vie, non pour le moment où l'on aime, car on n'éprouve alors que des tourmens, des regrets, de la jalousie : mais peu à peu ces tourmens-là deviennent des souvenirs, qui charment notre arrière saison : . . . et quand vous verrez la vieillesse douce, facile et tolérante, vous pourrez dire comme Fontenelle : L'amour a passé par-là.—SCRIBE : *La Vieille.*

MISS GRYLL carefully avoided being alone with Mr. Falconer, in order not to give him an opportunity of speaking on the forbidden subject. She was confident that she had taken the only course which promised to relieve her from a life of intolerable suspense; but she wished to subject her conduct to dispassionate opinion, and she thought she could not submit it to a more calmly-judging

person than her old spinster friend, Miss Ilex, who had, moreover, the great advantage of being a woman of the world. She therefore took an early opportunity of telling her what had passed between herself and Mr. Falconer, and asking her judgment on the point.

Miss Ilex.—Why, my dear, if I thought there had been the slightest chance of his ever knowing his own mind sufficiently to come to the desired conclusion himself, I should have advised your giving him a little longer time; but as it is clear to me that he never would have done so, and as you are decidedly partial to him, I think you have taken the best course which was open to you. He had all but declared to you more than once before; but this "all but" would have continued, and you would have sacrificed your life to him for nothing.

Miss Gryll.—But do you think you would in my case have done as I did?

Miss Ilex.—No, my dear, I certainly should not; for, in a case very similar, I did not. It does not follow that I was right. On the contrary, I think you are right, and I was wrong. You have shown true moral courage where it was most needed.

Miss Gryll.—I hope I have not revived any displeasing recollections.

Miss Ilex.—No, my dear, no; the recollections are not displeasing. The day-dreams of youth, however fallacious, are a composite of pain and pleasure: for the sake of the latter the former is endured, nay, even cherished in memory.

Miss Gryll.—Hearing what I hear you were, seeing what I see you are, observing your invariable cheerfulness, I should not have thought it possible that you could have been crossed in love, as your words seem to imply.

Miss Ilex.—I was, my dear, and have been foolish enough to be constant all my life to a single idea; and yet I would not part with this shadow for any attainable reality.

Miss Gryll.—If it were not opening the fountain of an ancient sorrow, I could wish to know the story, not from idle curiosity, but from my interest in you.

Miss Ilex.—Indeed, my dear Morgana, it is very little of a story: but such as it is, I am willing to tell it you. I had the credit of being handsome and accomplished. I had several lovers; but my inner thoughts distinguished only one;

and he, I think, had a decided preference for me, but it was a preference of present impression. If some Genius had commanded him to choose a wife from any company of which I was one, he would, I feel sure, have chosen me ; but he was very much of an universal lover, and was always overcome by the smiles of present beauty. He was of a romantic turn of mind : he disliked and avoided the ordinary pursuits of young men : he delighted in the society of accomplished young women, and in that alone. It was the single link between him and the world. He would disappear for weeks at a time, wandering in forests, climbing mountains, and descending into the dingles of mountain-streams, with no other companion than a Newfoundland dog ; a large black dog, with a white breast, four white paws, and a white tip to his tail : a beautiful affectionate dog : I often patted him on the head, and fed him with my hand. He knew me as well as Bajardo* knew Angelica.

Tears started into her eyes at the recollection of the dog. She paused for a moment.

Miss Gryll.—I see the remembrance is painful. Do not proceed.

Miss Ilex.—No, my dear. I would not, if I could, forget that dog. Well, my young gentleman, as I have said, was a sort of universal lover, and made a sort of half-declaration to half the young women he knew : sincerely for the moment to all : but with more permanent earnestness, more constant return, to me than to any other. If I had met him with equal earnestness, if I could have said or implied to him in any way, "Take me while you may, or think of me no more," I am persuaded I should not now write myself spinster. But I wrapped myself up in reserve. I thought it fitting that all advances should come from him : that I should at most show nothing more than willingness to hear, not even the semblance of anxiety to receive them. So nothing came of our love

* Rinaldo's horse : he had escaped from his master, and had repelled Sacripante with his heels :—

> Indi va mansueto alla donzella,
> Con umile sembiante e gesto umano :
> Come intorno al padrone il can saltella,
> Che sia due giorni o tre stato lontano.
> Bajardo ancora avea memoria d'ella,
> Che in Albracca il servia già di sua mano.
>
> *Orlando Furioso*, c. i. s. 75.

but remembrance and regret. Another girl, whom I am sure he loved less, but who understood him better, acted towards him as I ought to have done, and became his wife. Therefore, my dear, I applaud your moral courage, and regret that I had it not when the occasion required it.

Miss Gryll.—My lover, if I may so call him, differs from yours in this: that he is not wandering in his habits, nor versatile in his affections.

Miss Ilex.—The peculiar system of domestic affection in which he was brought up, and which his maturer years have confirmed, presents a greater obstacle to you than any which my lover's versatility presented to me, if I had known how to deal with it.

Miss Gryll.—But how was it, that, having so many admirers as you must have had, you still remained single?

Miss Ilex.—Because I had fixed my heart on one who was not like any one else. If he had been one of a class, such as most persons in this world are, I might have replaced the first idea by another; but "his soul was like a star, and dwelt apart."

Miss Gryll.—A very erratic star, apparently. A comet, rather.

Miss Ilex.—No. For the qualities which he loved and admired in the object of his temporary affection, existed more in his imagination than in her. She was only the framework of the picture of his fancy. He was true to his idea, though not to the exterior semblance on which he appended it, and to or from which he so readily transferred it. Unhappily for myself, he was more of a reality to me than I was to him.

Miss Gryll.—His marriage could scarcely have been a happy one. Did you ever meet him again?

Miss Ilex.—Not of late years, but for a time occasionally in general society, which he very sparingly entered. Our intercourse was friendly; but he never knew, never imagined, how well I loved him, nor even, perhaps, that I had loved him at all. I had kept my secret only too well. He retained his wandering habits, disappearing from time to time, but always returning home. I believe he had no cause to complain of his wife. Yet I cannot help thinking that I could have fixed him and kept him at home. Your case is in many respects similar to mine; but the rivalry to me was in a wandering fancy: to you it is in fixed domestic affections.

Still, you were in as much danger as I was of being the victim of an idea and a punctilio : and you have taken the only course to save you from it. I regret that I gave in to the punctilio : but I would not part with the idea. I find a charm in the recollection far preferable to

The waveless calm, the slumber of the dead

which weighs on the minds of those who have never loved, or never earnestly.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ARISTOPHANES IN LONDON.

Non duco contentionis funem, dum constet inter nos, quod fere totus mundus exerceat histrioniam.—PETRONIUS ARBITER.

I do not draw the rope of contention,* while it is agreed amongst us, that almost the whole world practises acting.

All the world's a stage.—SHAKSPEARE.

En el teatro del mundo
Todos son representantes.—CALDERON.

Tous les comédiens ne sont pas au théâtre.—*French Proverb.*

RAIN came, and thaw, followed by drying wind. The roads were in good order for the visitors to the Aristophanic comedy. The fifth day of Christmas was fixed for the performance. The theatre was brilliantly lighted, with spermaceti candles in glass chandeliers for the audience, and argand lamps for the stage. In addition to Mr. Gryll's own houseful of company, the beauty and fashion of the surrounding country, which comprised an extensive circle, adorned the semicircular seats ; which, however, were not mere stone benches, but were backed, armed, and padded into comfortable stalls. Lord Curryfin was in his glory, in the capacity of stage-manager.

The curtain rising, as there was no necessity for its being

* A metaphor apparently taken from persons pulling in opposite directions at each end of a rope. I cannot see, as some have done, that it has anything in common with Horace's *Tortum digna sequi potius quam ducere funem :* "More worthy to follow than to lead the tightened cord :" which is a metaphor taken from a towing line, or any line acting in a similar manner, where one draws and another is drawn. Horace applies it to money, which he says, should be the slave, and not the master of its possessor.

made to fall,* discovered the scene, which was on the London bank of the Thames, on the terrace of a mansion occupied by the Spirit-rapping Society, with an archway in the centre of the building, showing a street in the background. Gryllus was lying asleep. Circe, standing over him, began the dialogue.

CIRCE.
Wake, Gryllus, and arise in human form.

GRYLLUS.
I have slept soundly, and had pleasant dreams.

CIRCE.
I, too, have soundly slept. Divine how long.

GRYLLUS.
Why, judging by the sun, some fourteen hours.

CIRCE.
Three thousand years.

GRYLLUS.
That is a nap indeed.
But this is not your garden, nor your palace.
Where are we now?

CIRCE.
Three thousand years ago,
This land was forest, and a bright pure river
Ran through it to and from the Ocean stream.
Now, through a wilderness of human forms,
And human dwellings, a polluted flood
Rolls up and down, charged with all earthly poisons,
Poisoning the air in turn.

GRYLLUS.
I see vast masses
Of strange unnatural things.

CIRCE.
Houses, and ships,
And boats, and chimneys vomiting black smoke,
Horses, and carriages of every form,
And restless bipeds, rushing here and there
For profit or for pleasure, as they phrase it.

GRYLLUS.
Oh, Jupiter and Bacchus! what a crowd,
Flitting, like shadows without mind or purpose,
Such as Ulysses saw in Erebus.
But wherefore are we here?

* The Athenian theatre was open to the sky, and if the curtain had been made to fall it would have been folded up in mid air, destroying the effect of the scene. Being raised from below, it was invisible when not in use.

CIRCE.

There have arisen
Some mighty masters of the invisible world,
And these have summoned us.

GRYLLUS.

With what design?

CIRCE.

That they themselves must tell. Behold they come,
Carrying a mystic table, around which
They work their magic spells. Stand by, and mark.

Three spirit-rappers appeared, carrying a table, which they placed on one side of the stage:

1. Carefully the table place,
Let our gifted brother trace
A ring around the enchanted space.
2. Let him tow'rd the table point,
With his first fore-finger joint,
And with mesmerized beginning,
Set the sentient oak-slab spinning.
3. Now it spins around, around,
Sending forth a murmuring sound,
By the initiate understood
As of spirits in the wood.

ALL. Once more Circe we invoke.

CIRCE.

Here: not bound in ribs of oak,
Nor, from wooden disk revolving,
In strange sounds strange riddles solving,
But in native form appearing,
Plain to sight, as clear to hearing.

THE THREE.

Thee with wonder we behold.
By thy hair of burning gold,
By thy face with radiance bright,
By thine eyes of beaming light,
We confess thee, mighty one,
For the daughter of the Sun.
On thy form we gaze appalled.

CIRCE.

Gryllus, too, your summons called.

THE THREE.

Him of yore thy powerful spell
Doomed in swinish shape to dwell:
Yet such life he reckoned then
Happier than the life of men.
Now, when carefully he ponders
All our scientific wonders,

Steam-driven myriads, all in motion,
On the land and on the ocean,
Going, for the sake of going,
Wheresoever waves are flowing,
Wheresoever winds are blowing;
Converse through the sea transmitted,
Swift as ever thought has flitted;
All the glories of our time,
Past the praise of loftiest rhyme;
Will he, seeing these, indeed,
Still retain his ancient creed,
Ranking, in his mental plan,
Life of beast o'er life of man?

CIRCE.

Speak, Gryllus.

GRYLLUS.

It is early yet to judge:
But all the novelties I yet have seen
Seem changes for the worse.

THE THREE.

If we could show him
Our triumphs in succession, one by one,
'Twould surely change his judgment: and herein
How might'st thou aid us, Circe!

CIRCE.

I will do so:
And calling down, like Socrates of yore,
The clouds to aid us, they shall shadow forth,
In bright succession, all that they behold,
From air, on earth and sea. I wave my wand:
And lo! they come, even as they came in Athens,
Shining like virgins of ethereal life.

The Chorus of Clouds descended, and a dazzling array of female beauty was revealed by degrees through folds of misty gauze. They sang their first choral song:

CHORUS OF CLOUDS.*

I.

Clouds ever-flowing, conspicuously soaring,
From loud-rolling Ocean, whose stream† gave us birth
To heights, whence we look over torrents down-pouring
To the deep quiet vales of the fruit-giving earth,—

* The first stanza is pretty closely adapted from the strophe of Aristophanes: Αἰναοι Νεφέλαι. The second is only a distant imitation of the antistrophe: Παρθένοι ὀμβροφόροι.

† In Homer, and all the older poets, the ocean is a river surrounding the earth, and the seas are inlets from it.

As the broad eye of Æther, unwearied in brightness,
Dissolves our mist-veil in glittering rays,
Our forms we reveal from its vapoury lightness,
In semblance immortal, with far-seeing gaze.

II.

Shower-bearing Virgins, we seek not the regions
Whence Pallas, the Muses, and Bacchus have fled,
But the city, where Commerce embodies her legions,
And Mammon exalts his omnipotent head.
All joys of thought, feeling, and taste are before us,
Wherever the beams of his favour are warm:
Though transient full oft as the veil of our chorus,
Now golden with glory, now passing in storm.

Reformers, scientific, moral, educational, political, passed in succession, each answering a question of Gryllus. Gryllus observed, that so far from everything being better than it had been, it seemed that everything was wrong and wanted mending. The chorus sang its second song.

Seven competitive examiners entered with another table, and sat down on the opposite side of the stage to the spirit-rappers. They brought forward Hermogenes * as a crammed fowl to argue with Gryllus. Gryllus had the best of the argument; but the examiners adjudged the victory to Hermogenes. The chorus sang its third song.

Circe, at the request of the spirit-rappers, whose power was limited to the production of sound, called up several visible spirits, all illustrious in their day, but all appearing as in the days of their early youth, "before their renown was around them." They were all subjected to competitive examination, and were severally pronounced disqualified for the pursuit in which they had shone. At last came one whom Circe recommended to the examiners as a particularly promising youth. He was a candidate for military life. Every question relative to his profession he answered to the purpose. To every question not so relevant, he replied that he did not know and did not care. This drew on him a reprimand. He was pronounced disqualified, and ordered to join the rejected, who were ranged in a line along the back of the scene. A touch of Circe's wand changed them into their semblance of maturer years. Among them were Hannibal and Oliver

* See chapter xv., page 360.

Cromwell; and in the fore-ground was the last candidate, Richard Cœur-de-Lion. Richard flourished his battle-axe over the heads of the examiners, who jumped up in great trepidation, overturned their table, tumbled over one another, and escaped as best they might in haste and terror. The heroes vanished. The chorus sang its fourth song.

CHORUS.

I.

As before the pike will fly
Dace and roach and such small fry;
As the leaf before the gale,
As the chaff beneath the flail;
As before the wolf the flocks,
As before the hounds the fox;
As before the cat the mouse,
As the rat from falling house;
As the fiend before the spell
Of holy water, book, and bell;
As the ghost from dawning day,—
So has fled, in gaunt dismay,
This septemvirate of quacks,
From the shadowy attacks
Of Cœur-de-Lion's battle-axe.

II.

Could he in corporeal might,
Plain to feeling as to sight,
Rise again to solar light,
How his arm would put to flight
All the forms of Stygian night,
That round us rise in grim array,
Darkening the meridian day:
Bigotry, whose chief employ
Is embittering earthly joy;
Chaos, throned in pedant state,
Teaching echo how to prate;
And, "Ignorance, with looks profound,"
Not "with eye that loves the ground,"
But stalking wide, with lofty crest,
In science's pretentous vest.

III.

And now, great masters of the realms of shade,
To end the task which called us down from air,
We shall present, in pictured show arrayed,
Of this your modern world the triumphs rare,
That Gryllus's benighted spirit
May wake to your transcendent merit,
And, with profoundest admiration thrilled,

He may with willing mind assume his place
In your steam-nursed, steam-borne, steam-killed,
And gas-enlightened race.

CIRCE.

Speak, Gryllus, what you see.

GRYLLUS.

I see the ocean,
And o'er its face ships passing wide and far;
Some with expanded sails before the breeze,
And some with neither sails nor oars, impelled
By some invisible power against the wind,
Scattering the spray before them. But of many
One is on fire, and one has struck on rocks
And melted in the waves like fallen snow.
Two crash together in the middle sea,
And go to pieces on the instant, leaving
No soul to tell the tale, and one is hurled
In fragments to the sky, strewing the deep
With death and wreck. I had rather live with Circe
Even as I was, than flit about the world
In those enchanted ships, which some Alastor
Must have devised as traps for mortal ruin.

CIRCE.

Look yet again.

GRYLLUS.

Now the whole scene is changed.
I see long chains of strange machines on wheels,
With one in front of each, puffing white smoke
From a black hollow column. Fast and far
They speed, like yellow leaves before the gale,
When autumn winds are strongest. Through their windows
I judge them thronged with people; but distinctly
Their speed forbids my seeing.

SPIRIT-RAPPER.

This is one
Of the great glories of our modern time.
"Men are become as birds," and skim like swallows
The surface of the world.

GRYLLUS.

For what good end?

SPIRIT-RAPPER.

The end is in itself—the end of skimming
The surface of the world.

GRYLLUS.

If that be all,
I had rather sit in peace in my old home:
But while I look, two of them meet and clash,
And pile their way with ruin. One is rolled
Down a steep bank; one through a broken bridge
Is dashed into a flood. Dead, dying, wounded,
Are there as in a battle-field. Are these
Your modern triumphs? Jove preserve me from them.

SPIRIT-RAPPER.

These ills are rare. Millions are borne in safety
Where one incurs mischance. Look yet again.

GRYLLUS.

I see a mass of light brighter than that
Which burned in Circe's palace, and beneath it
A motley crew, dancing to joyous music.
But from that light explosion comes, and flame;
And forth the dancers rush in haste and fear
From their wide-blazing hall.

SPIRIT-RAPPER.

Oh, Circe! Circe!
Thou show'st him all the evil of our arts
In more than just proportion to the good.
Good without evil is not given to man.
Jove, from his urns dispensing good and ill,
Gives ill unmixed to some, and good and ill
Mingled to many—good unmixed to none.*

* This is the true sense of the Homeric passage:—

Δοιοὶ γάρ τε πίθοι κατακείαται ἐν Διὸς οὔδει
Δώρων, οἷα δίδωσι, κακῶν, ἕτερος δὲ ἐάων·
Ὧι μὲν καμμίξας ὔῳῃ Ζεὺς τερπικέραυνος,
Ἄλλοτε μὲν τε κακῷ ὔγε κύρεται, ἄλλοτε δ' ἐσθλῷ.
Ὧι δέ κε τῶν λυγρῶν δώῃ, λωβητὸν ἔθηκε,
Καὶ ἑ κακὴ βούβρωστις ἐπὶ χθόνα δῖαν ἔλαυνει·
Φοιτᾷ δ' οὔτε θεοῖσι τετιμένος, οὔτε βροτοῖσιν.

HOMER: *Il.* xxiv.

There are only two distributions: good and ill mixed, and unmixed ill. None, as Heyne has observed, receive unmixed good. *Ex dolio bonorum nemo meracius accipit: hoc memorare omisit.* This sense is implied, not expressed. Pope missed it in his otherwise beautiful translation.

Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,
The source of evil one, and one of good:
From thence the cup of mortal man he fills,
Blessings to these, to those distributes ills,
To most he mingles both: the wretch decreed
To taste the bad, unmixed, is curst indeed;
Pursued by wrongs, by meagre famine driven,
He wanders, outcast both of earth and heaven.—POPE.

Our arts are good. The inevitable ill
That mixes with them, as with all things human,
Is as a drop of water in a goblet
Full of old wine.

GRYLLUS.

More than one drop, I fear,
And those of bitter water.

CIRCE.

There is yet
An ample field of scientific triumph:
What shall we show him next?

SPIRIT-RAPPER.

Pause we awhile.
He is not in the mood to feel conviction
Of our superior greatness. He is all
For rural comfort and domestic ease,
But our impulsive days are all for moving:
Sometimes with some ulterior end, but still
For moving, moving, always. There is nothing
Common between us in our points of judgment.
He takes his stand upon tranquillity,
We ours upon excitement. There we place
The being, end, and aim of mortal life,
The many are with us: some few, perhaps,
With him. We put the question to the vote
By universal suffrage. Aid us, Circe!
On talismanic wings your spells can waft
The question and reply. Are we not wiser,
Happier, and better, than the men of old,
Of Homer's days, of Athens, and of Rome?

VOICES WITHOUT.

Ay. No. Ay, ay. No. Ay, ay, ay, ay, ay,
We are the wisest race the earth has known,
The most advanced in all the arts of life,
In science, and in morals.

SPIRIT-RAPPER.

The ays have it.
What is that wondrous sound, that seems like thunder
Mixed with gigantic laughter?

CIRCE.

It is Jupiter,
Who laughs at your presumption; half in anger,
And half in mockery. Now, my worthy masters,
You must in turn experience in yourselves
The mighty magic thus far tried on others.

The table turned slowly, and by degrees went on spinning with accelerated speed. The legs assumed motion, and it

danced off the stage. The arms of the chairs put forth hands, and pinched the spirit-rappers, who sprang up and ran off, pursued by their chairs. This piece of mechanical pantomime was a triumph of Lord Curryfin's art, and afforded him ample satisfaction for the failure of his resonant vases.

CIRCE.

Now, Gryllus, we may seek our ancient home
In my enchanted isle.

GRYLLUS.

Not yet, not yet.
Good signs are toward of a joyous supper.
Therein the modern world may have its glory,
And I, like an impartial judge, am ready
To do it ample justice. But, perhaps,
As all we hitherto have seen are shadows,
So too may be the supper.

CIRCE.

Fear not, Gryllus.
That you will find a sound reality,
To which the land and air, seas, lakes, and rivers,
Have sent their several tributes. Now, kind friends,
Who with your smiles have graciously rewarded
Our humble, but most earnest aims to please,
And with your presence at our festal board
Will charm the winter midnight, Music gives
The signal: Welcome and old wine await you.

THE CHORUS.

Shadows to-night have offered portraits true
Of many follies which the world enthral.
"Shadows we are, and shadows we pursue:"
But, in the banquet's well-illumined hall,
Realities, delectable to all,
Invite you now our festal joy to share.
Could we our Attic prototype recall,
One compound word should give our bill of fare:*
But where our language fails, our hearts true welcome bear.

Miss Gryll was resplendent as Circe; and Miss Niphet, as leader of the chorus, looked like Melpomene herself, slightly unbending her tragic severity into that solemn smile which characterized the chorus of the old comedy. The charm of the first acted irresistibly on Mr. Falconer. The second would have completed, if anything had been wanted to complete it, the conquest of Lord Curryfin.

The supper passed off joyously, and it was a late hour of the morning before the company dispersed.

* As at the end of the *Ecclesiazusæ*.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE BALD VENUS.—INEZ DE CASTRO.—THE UNITY OF LOVE.

> Within the temple of my purer mind
> One imaged form shall ever live enshrined,
> And hear the vows, to first affection due,
> Still breathed: for love that ceases ne'er was true.
> LEYDEN'S *Scenes of Infancy.*

AN interval of a week was interposed between the comedy and the intended ball. Mr. Falconer having no fancy for balls, and disturbed beyond endurance by the interdict which Miss Gryll had laid on him against speaking, for four times seven days, on the subject nearest his heart, having discharged with becoming self-command his share in the Aristophanic comedy, determined to pass his remaining days of probation in the Tower, where he found, in the attentions of the seven sisters, not a perfect Nepenthe, but the only possible antidote to intense vexation of spirit. It is true, his two Hebes, pouring out his Madeira, approximated as nearly as anything could do to Helen's administration of the true Nepenthe. He might have sung of Madeira, as Redi's Bacchus sang of one of his favourite wines:—

> Egli è il vero oro potabile,
> Che mandar suole in esilio
> Ogni male inrimediabile:
> Egli è d'Elena il Nepente,
> Che fa stare il mondo allegro,
> Dai pensieri
> Foschi e neri
> Sempre sciolto, e sempre esente.*

Matters went on quietly at the Grange. One evening, Mr. Gryll said quietly to the Reverend Doctor Opimian—

I have heard you, doctor, more than once, very eulogistic of hair as indispensable to beauty. What say you to the bald Venus of the Romans—*Venus Calva?*

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Why, sir, if it were a question whether the Romans had any such deity, I would unhesitatingly maintain the *negatur*. Where do you find her?

* REDI: *Bacco in Toscana.*

Mr. Gryll.—In the first place, I find her in several dictionaries.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—A dictionary is nothing without an authority. You have no authority but that of one or two very late writers, and two or three old grammarians, who had found the word and guessed at its meaning. You do not find her in any genuine classic. A bald Venus! It is as manifest a contradiction in terms as hot ice, or black snow.

Lord Curryfin.—Yet I have certainly read, though I cannot at this moment say where, that there was in Rome a temple to *Venus Calva*, and that it was so dedicated in consequence of one of two circumstances: the first being that through some divine anger the hair of the Roman women fell off, and that Ancus Martius set up a bald statue of his wife, which served as an expiation, for all the women recovered their hair, and the worship of the Bald Venus was instituted; the other being, that when Rome was taken by the Gauls, and when they had occupied the city, and were besieging the Capitol, the besieged, having no materials to make bowstrings, the women cut off their hair for the purpose, and after the war a statue of the Bald Venus was raised in honour of the women.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I have seen the last story transferred to the time of the younger Maximin.* But when two or three explanations, of which only one can possibly be true, are given of any real or supposed fact, we may safely conclude that all are false. These are ridiculous myths, founded on the misunderstanding of an obsolete word. Some hold that *Calva*, as applied to Venus, signifies pure; but I hold with others that it signifies alluring, with a sense of deceit. You will find the cognate verbs, *calvo* and *calvor*, active,† passive,‡

* JULIUS CAPITOLINUS: *Max. Jun.* c. 7.

† Est et Venus Calva, ob hanc causam, quod cum Galli Capitolium obsiderent, et deessent funes Romanis ad tormenta facienda, Prima Domitia crinem suum, post cæteræ matronæ, imitatæ eam, exsecuerunt, unde facta tormenta; et post bellum statua Veneri hoc nomine collocata est: licet alii Calvam Venerem quasi puram tradant: *alii Calvam, quod corda calviat, id est, fallat atque eludat.* Quidam dicunt, porrigine olim capillos cecidisse fœminis, et Ancum regem suæ uxori statuam Calvam posuisse, quod constitit piaculo; nam mox omnibus fœminis capilli renati sunt: unde institutum ut Calva Venus coleretur.—SERVIUS ad *Aen.* i. 720.

The substance of this passage is given in the text.

‡ Contra ille *calvi* ratus.—SALLUST: *Hist.* iii.

Thinking himself to be deceitfully allured.

and deponent,* in Servius, Plautus, and Sallust. Nobody pretends that the Greeks had a bald Venus. The *Venus Calva* of the Romans was the *Aphroditê Dolié* of the Greeks.† Beauty cannot co-exist with baldness; but it may and does co-exist with deceit. Homer makes deceitful allurement an essential element in the girdle of Venus.‡ Sappho addresses her as craft-weaving Venus.§ Why should I multiply examples, when poetry so abounds with complaints of deceitful love, that I will be bound every one of this company could, without a moment's hesitation, find a quotation in point?—Miss Gryll, to begin with.

Miss Gryll.—Oh, doctor, with every one who has a memory for poetry, it must be *l'embarras de richesses.* We could occupy the time till midnight in going round and round on the subject. We should soon come to an end with instances of truth and constancy.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Not so soon, perhaps. If we were to go on accumulating examples, I think I could find you a Penelope for a Helen, a Fiordiligi for an Angelica, an Imogene for a Calista, a Sacripant for a Rinaldo, a Romeo for an Angelo, to nearly the end of the chapter. I will not say quite, for I am afraid at the end of the catalogue the numbers of the unfaithful would predominate.

Miss Ilex.—Do you think, doctor, you would find many examples of love that is one, and once for all; love never transferred from its first object to a second?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Plato holds that such is the essence of love, and poetry and romance present it in many instances.

Miss Ilex.—And the contrary in many more.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—If we look, indeed, into the realities of life, as they offer themselves to us in our own experience, in history, in biography, we shall find few instances of constancy to first love; but it would be possible to compile a volume of illustrious examples of love which, though it may have previously ranged, is at last fixed in single, unchanging constancy. Even Iñez de Castro was only the second love of Don Pedro of Portugal; yet what an instance

* Nam ubi domi sola sum, sopor manus *calvitur.*
PLAUTUS *in Casinâ.*
For when I am at home alone, sleep alluringly deceives my hands.

† Ἀφροδίτη Δολίη.

‡ Παρφασις, ἥτ' ἔκλεψε νόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων.– *Il.* xiv. 217.

§ Παῖ Διὸς δολοπλόκε.

is there of love enduring in the innermost heart, as if it had been engraved on marble.

Miss Gryll.—What is that story, doctor? I know it but imperfectly.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Iñez de Castro was the daughter, singularly beautiful and accomplished, of a Castilian nobleman, attached to the Court of Alphonso the Fourth of Portugal. When very young, she became the favourite and devoted friend of Constance, the wife of the young Prince Don Pedro. The princess died early, and the grief of Iñez touched the heart of Pedro, who found no consolation but in her society. Thence grew love, which resulted in secret marriage. Pedro and Iñez lived in seclusion at Coimbra, perfectly happy in each other, and in two children who were born to them, till three of Alphonso's courtiers, moved by I know not what demon of mischief—for I never could discover an adequate motive—induced the king to attempt the dissolution of the marriage, and failing in this, to authorize them to murder Iñez during a brief absence of her husband. Pedro raised a rebellion, and desolated the estates of the assassins, who escaped, one into France, and two into Castile. Pedro laid down his arms on the entreaty of his mother, but would never again see his father, and lived with his two children in the strictest retirement in the scene of his ruined happiness. When Alphonso died, Pedro determined not to assume the crown till he had punished the assassins of his wife. The one who had taken refuge in France was dead; the others were given up by the King of Castile. They were put to death, their bodies were burned, and their ashes were scattered to the winds. He then proceeded to the ceremony of his coronation. The mortal form of Iñez, veiled and in royal robes, was enthroned by his side: he placed the queenly crown on her head, and commanded all present to do her homage. He raised in a monastery, side by side, two tombs of white marble, one for her, one for himself. He visited the spot daily, and remained inconsolable till he rejoined her in death. This is the true history, which has been sadly perverted by fiction.

Miss Ilex.—There is, indeed, something grand in that long-enduring constancy: something terribly impressive in that veiled spectral image of robed and crowned majesty. You have given this, doctor, as an instance that the first love is

not necessarily the strongest, and this, no doubt, is frequently true. Even Romeo had loved Rosalind before he saw Juliet. But love which can be so superseded, is scarcely love. It is acquiescence in a semblance: acquiescence, which may pass for love through the entire space of life, if the latent sympathy should never meet its perfect counterpart.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Which it very seldom does; but acquiescence in the semblance is rarely enduring, and hence there are few examples of life-long constancy. But I hold with Plato that true love is single, indivisible, unalterable.

Miss Ilex.—In this sense, then, true love is first love: for the love which endures to the end of life, though it may be the second in semblance, is the first in reality.

The next morning Lord Curryfin said to Miss Niphet: "You took no part in the conversation of last evening. You gave no opinion on the singleness and permanence of love."

Miss Niphet.—I mistrust the experience of others, and I have none of my own.

Lord Curryfin.—Your experience, when it comes, cannot but confirm the theory. The love which once dwells on you can never turn to another.

Miss Niphet.—I do not know that I ought to wish to inspire such an attachment.

Lord Curryfin.—Because you could not respond to it?

Miss Niphet.—On the contrary; because I think it possible I might respond to it too well.

She paused a moment, and then, afraid of trusting herself to carry on the dialogue, she said: "Come into the hall, and play at battledore and shuttlecock."

He obeyed the order: but in the exercise her every movement developed some new grace, that maintained at its highest degree the intensity of his passionate admiration.

CHAPTER XXX.

A CAPTIVE KNIGHT.—RICHARD AND ALICE.

——— dum fata sinunt, jungamus amores :
Mox veniet tenebris Mors adoperta caput.
Jam subrepet iners ætas, nec amare licebit,
Dicere nec cano blanditias capite.
TIBULLUS.

Let us, while Fate allows, in love combine,
Ere our last night its shade around us throw,
Or Age, slow-creeping, quench the fire divine,
And tender words befit not locks of snow.

THE shuttlecock had been some time on the wing, struck to and fro with unerring aim, and to all appearances would never have touched the ground, if Lord Curryfin had not seen, or fancied he saw, symptoms of fatigue on the part of his fair antagonist. He therefore, instead of returning the shuttlecock, struck it upward, caught it in his hand, and presented it to her, saying, "I give in. The victory is yours." She answered, "The victory is yours, as it always is, in courtesy."

She said this with a melancholy smile, more fascinating to him than the most radiant expression from another. She withdrew to the drawing-room, motioning to him not to follow.

In the drawing-room she found Miss Gryll, who appeared to be reading ; at any rate, a book was open before her.

Miss Gryll.—You did not see me just now, as I passed through the hall. You saw only two things : the shuttlecock, and your partner in the game.

Miss Niphet.—It is not possible to play, and see anything but the shuttlecock.

Miss Gryll.—And the hand that strikes it.

Miss Niphet.—That comes unavoidably into sight.

Miss Gryll.—My dear Alice, you are in love, and do not choose to confess it.

Miss Niphet.—I have no right to be in love with your suitor.

Miss Gryll.—He was my suitor, and has not renounced his pursuit : but he is your lover. I ought to have seen long ago, that from the moment his eyes rested on you, all else was nothing to him. With all that habit of the world,

which enables men to conceal their feelings in society, with all his exertion to diffuse his attentions as much as possible among all the young ladies in his company, it must have been manifest to a careful observer, that when it came, as it seemed in ordinary course, to be your turn to be attended to, the expression of his features was changed from complacency and courtesy to delight and admiration. I could not have failed to see it, if I had not been occupied with other thoughts. Tell me candidly, do you not think it is so?

Miss Niphet.—Indeed, my dear Morgana, I did not designedly enter into rivalry with you; but I do think you conjecture rightly.

Miss Gryll.—And if he were free to offer himself to you, and if he did so offer himself, you would accept him?

Miss Niphet.—Assuredly I would.

Miss Gryll.—Then, when you next see him, he shall be free. I have set my happiness on another cast, and I will stand the hazard of the die.

Miss Niphet.—You are very generous, Morgana: for I do not think you give up what you do not value.

Miss Gryll.—No, indeed. I value him highly. So much so, that I have hesitated, and might have finally inclined to him, if I had not perceived his invincible preference of you. I am sorry, for your sake, and his, that I did not clearly perceive it sooner; but you see what it is to be spoiled by admirers. I did not think it possible that any one could be preferred to me. I ought to have thought it possible, but I had no experience in that direction. So now you see a striking specimen of mortified vanity.

Miss Niphet.—You have admirers in abundance, Morgana: more than have often fallen to the lot of the most attractive young women. And love is such a capricious thing, that to be the subject of it is no proof of superior merit. There are inexplicable affinities of sympathy, that make up an irresistible attraction, heaven knows how.

Miss Gryll.—And these inexplicable affinities Lord Curryfin has found in you, and you in him.

Miss Niphet.—He has never told me so.

Miss Gryll.—Not in words: but looks and actions have spoken for him. You have both struggled to conceal your feelings from others, perhaps even from yourselves. But you are both too ingenuous to dissemble successfully. You suit

each other thoroughly : and I have no doubt you will find in each other the happiness I most cordially wish you.

Miss Gryll soon found an opportunity of conversing with Lord Curryfin, and began with him somewhat sportively : "I have been thinking," she said, "of an old song which contains a morsel of good advice—

> "Be sure to be off with the old love,
> Before you are on with the new.

You begin by making passionate love to me, and all at once you turn round to one of my young friends, and say, 'Zephyrs whisper how I love you.'"

Lord Curryfin.—Oh, no ! no, indeed. I have not said that, nor anything to the same effect.

Miss Gryll.—Well, if you have not exactly said it, you have implied it. You have looked it. You have felt it. You cannot conceal it. You cannot deny it. I give you notice, that, if I die for love of you, I shall haunt you.

Lord Curryfin.—Ah ! Miss Gryll, if you do not die till you die for love of me, you will be as immortal as Circe, whom you so divinely represented.

Miss Gryll.—You offered yourself to me, to have and to hold, for ever and aye. Suppose I claim you. Do not look so frightened. You deserve some punishment, but that would be too severe. But, to a certain extent, you belong to me, and I claim the right to transfer you. I shall make a present of you to Miss Niphet. So, according to the old rules of chivalry, I order you, as my captive by right, to present yourself before her, and tell her that you have come to receive her commands, and obey them to the letter. I expect she will keep you in chains for life. You do not look much alarmed at the prospect. Yet you must be aware, that you are a great criminal ; and you have not a word to say in your own justification.

Lord Curryfin.—Who could be insensible to charms like yours, if hope could have mingled with the contemplation ? But there were several causes by which hope seemed forbidden, and therefore———

Miss Gryll.—And therefore when beauty, and hope, and sympathy shone under a more propitious star, you followed its guidance. You could not help yourself :

> What heart were his that could resist
> That melancholy smile ?

I shall flatter myself that I might have kept you, if I had tried hard for it at first; but

Il pentirsi da sesto nulla giova.

No doubt you might have said with the old song,

I ne'er could any lustre see
In eyes that would not look on me.

But you scarcely gave me time to look on you before you were gone. You see, however, like our own Mirror of Knighthood, I make the best of my evil fate, and

Cheer myself up with ends of verse,
And sayings of philosophers.

Lord Curryfin.—I am glad to see you so merry; for even if your heart were more deeply touched by another than it ever could have been by me, I think I may say of you, in your own manner,

So light a heel
Will never wear the everlasting flint.

I hope and I believe you will always trip joyously over the surface of the world. You are the personification of L'Allegro.

Miss Grylll.—I do not know how that may be. But go now to the personification of La Penseroso. If you do not turn her into a brighter Allegro than I am, you may say I have no knowledge of woman's heart.

It was not long after this dialogue that Lord Curryfin found an opportunity of speaking to Miss Niphet alone. He said, "I am charged with a duty, such as was sometimes imposed on knights in the old days of chivalry. A lady, who claims me as her captive by right, has ordered me to kneel at your feet, to obey your commands, and to wear your chains, if you please to impose them.

Miss Niphet.—To your kneeling I say, Rise; for your obedience, I have no commands; for chains, I have none to impose.

Lord Curryfin.—You have imposed them. I wear them already, inextricably, indissolubly.

Miss Niphet.—If I may say, with the witch in *Thalaba*,

Only she,
Who knit his bonds, can set him free,

I am prepared to unbind the bonds. Rise, my lord, rise.

Lord Curryfin.—I will rise, if you give me your hand to lift me up.

Miss Niphet.—There it is. Now that it has helped you up, let it go.

Lord Curryfin.—And do not call me, my lord.

Miss Niphet.—What shall I call you?

Lord Curryfin.—Call me Richard, and let me call you Alice.

Miss Niphet.—That is a familiarity only sanctioned by longer intimacy than ours has been.

Lord Curryfin.—Or closer?

Miss Niphet.—We have been very familiar friends during the brief term of our acquaintance. But let go my hand.

Lord Curryfin.—I have set my heart on being allowed to call you Alice, and on your calling me Richard.

Miss Niphet.—It must not be so—at least, not yet.

Lord Curryfin.—There is nothing I would not do to acquire the right.

Miss Niphet.—Nothing?

Lord Curryfin.—Nothing.

Miss Niphet.—How thrives your suit with Miss Gryll?

Lord Curryfin.—That is at an end. I have her permission—her command she calls it—to throw myself at your feet, and on your mercy.

Miss Niphet.—How did she take leave of you, crying or laughing?

Lord Curryfin.—Why, if anything, laughing.

Miss Niphet.—Do you not feel mortified?

Lord Curryfin.—I have another and deeper feeling, which predominates over any possible mortification.

Miss Niphet.—And that is——

Lord Curryfin.—Can you doubt what it is!

Miss Niphet.—I will not pretend to doubt. I have for some time been well aware of your partiality for me.

Lord Curryfin.—Partiality! Say love, adoration, absorption of all feelings into one.

Miss Niphet.—Then you may call me Alice. But once more, let go my hand.

Lord Curryfin.—My hand, is it not?

Miss Niphet.—Yours, when you claim it.

Lord Curryfin.—Then thus I seal my claim.

He kissed her hand as respectfully as was consistent with

"masterless passion;" and she said to him, "I will not dissemble. If I have had one wish stronger than another—strong enough to exclude all others—it has been for the day when you might be free to say to me what you have now said. Am I too frank with you?"

Lord Curryfin.—Oh, heaven, no! I drink in your words as a stream from paradise.

He sealed his claim again, but this time it was on her lips. The rose again mantled on her cheeks, but the blush was heightened to damask. She withdrew herself from his arms, saying, "Once for all, till you have an indisputable right."

CHAPTER XXXI.

A TWELFTH-NIGHT BALL.—PANTOPRAGMATIC COOKERY.—MODERN VANDALISM.—A BOWL OF PUNCH.

Sic erimus cuncti, postquam nos auferet Orcus:
Ergo vivamus, dum licet esse bene.

So must we be, when ends our mortal day:
Then let us live, while yet live well we may.
Trimalchio, with the silver skeleton: in PETRONIUS: c. 34.

TWELFTH-NIGHT was the night of the ball. The folding-doors of the drawing-rooms, which occupied their entire breadth, were thrown wide open. The larger room was appropriated to grown dancers; the smaller to children, who came in some force, and were placed within the magnetic attraction of an enormous twelfth-cake, which stood in a decorated recess. The carpets had been taken up, and the floors were painted with forms in chalk* by skilful artists, under the superintendance of Mr. Pallet. The library, separated from all the apartments by ante-chambers with double doors, was assigned, with an arrangement of whist-tables, to such of the elder portion of the party as might prefer that mode of

* These all wear out of me, like forms, with chalk
Painted on rich men's floors, for one feast-night:
says WORDSWORTH, of "chance acquaintance," in his neighbourhood. —*Miscellaneous Sonnets*, No. 39.

amusement to being mere spectators of the dancing. Mr. Gryll, with Miss Ilex, Mr. MacBorrowdale, and the Reverend Doctor Opimian, established his own quadrille party in a corner of the smaller drawing-room, where they could at once play and talk, and enjoy the enjoyment of the young. Lord Curryfin was Master of the Ceremonies.

After two or three preliminary dances, to give time for the arrival of the whole of the company, the twelfth-cake was divided. The characters were drawn exclusively among the children, and the little king and queen were duly crowned, placed on a theatrical throne, and paraded in state round both drawing-rooms, to their own great delight and that of their little associates. Then the ball was supposed to commence, and was by general desire opened with a minuet by Miss Niphet and Lord Curryfin. Then came alternations of quadrilles and country dances, interspersed with occasional waltzes and polkas. So the ball went merrily, with, as usual, abundant love-making in mute signs and in *sotto voce* parlance.

Lord Curryfin, having brought his own love-making to a satisfactory close, was in exuberant spirits, sometimes joining in the dance, sometimes—in his official capacity—taking the round of the rooms to see that everything was going on to everybody's satisfaction. He could not fail to observe that his proffered partnership in the dance, though always graciously, was not so ambitiously accepted as before he had disposed of himself for life. A day had sufficed to ask and obtain the consent of Miss Niphet's father, who now sate on the side of the larger drawing-room, looking with pride and delight on his daughter, and with cordial gratification on her choice; and when it was once, as it was at once known, that Miss Niphet was to be Lady Curryfin, his lordship passed into the class of married men, and was no longer the object of that solicitous attention which he had received as an undrawn prize in the lottery of marriage, while it was probable that somebody would have him, and nobody knew who.

The absence of Mr. Falconer was remarked by several young ladies, to whom it appeared that Miss Gryll had lost her two most favoured lovers at once. However, as she had still many others, it was not yet a decided case for sympathy. Of course she had no lack of partners, and whatever might have been her internal anxiety, she was not the least gay among the joyous assembly.

Lord Curryfin, in his circuit of the apartments, paused at the quadrille-table, and said, "You have been absent two or three days, Mr. MacBorrowdale—what news have you brought from London?"

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—Not much, my lord. Tables turn as usual, and the ghost-trade appears to be thriving: for instead of being merely audible, the ghosts are becoming tangible, and shake hands under the tables with living wiseacres, who solemnly attest the fact. Civilized men ill-use their wives; the wives revenge themselves in their own way, and the Divorce Court has business enough on its hands to employ it twenty years at its present rate of progression. Commercial bubbles burst, and high-pressure boilers blow up, and mountebanks of all descriptions flourish on public credulity. Everywhere there are wars and rumours of wars. The Peace Society has wound up its affairs in the Insolvent Court of Prophecy. A great tribulation is coming on the earth, and Apollyon in person is to be perpetual dictator of all the nations. There is, to be sure, one piece of news in your line, but it will be no news to you. There is a meeting of the Pantopragmatic Society, under the presidency of Lord Facing-both-ways, who has opened it with a long speech, philanthropically designed as an elaborate exercise in fallacies, for the benefit of young rhetoricians. The society has divided its work into departments, which are to meddle with everything, from the highest to the lowest—from a voice in legislation to a finger in Jack Horner's pie. I looked for a department of Fish, with your lordship's name at the head of it; but I did not find it. It would be a fine department. It would divide itself naturally into three classes—living fish, fossil fish, and fish in the frying-pan.

Lord Curryfin.—I assure you, Mr. MacBorrowdale, all this seems as ridiculous now to me as it does to you. The third class of fish is all that I shall trouble myself with in future, and that only at the tables of myself and my friends.

Mr. Gryll.—I wonder the Pantopragmatics have not a department of cookery; a female department, to teach young wives how to keep their husbands at home, by giving them as good dinners as they can get abroad, especially at clubs. Those anti-domestic institutions receive their chief encouragement from the total ignorance of cookery on the part of young wives: for in this, as in all other arts of life, it is not suffi-

cient to order what shall be done: it is necessary to know how it ought to be done. This is a matter of more importance to social well-being, than nine-tenths of the subjects the Pantopragmatics meddle with.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—And therefore I rejoice that they do not meddle with it. A dinner, prepared from a New Art of Cookery, concocted under their auspices, would be more comical and more uneatable than the Roman dinner in Peregrine Pickle. Let young ladies learn cookery by all means: but let them learn under any other tuition than that of the Pantopragmatic Society.

Mr. Gryll.—As for the tribulation coming on the earth, I am afraid there is some ground to expect it, without looking for its foreshadowing exclusively to the Apocalypse. Niebuhr, who did not draw his opinions from prophecy, rejoiced that his career was coming to a close, for he thought we were on the eve of a darker middle age.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—He had not before his eyes the astounding march of intellect, drumming and trumpeting science from city to city. But I am afraid that sort of obstreperous science only gives people the novel "use of their eyes to see the way of blindness."*

> Truths which, from action's paths retired,
> My silent search in vain required,†

I am not likely to find in the successive gabblings of a dozen lecturers of Babel.

Mr. Gryll.—If you could so find them, they would be of little avail against the new irruption of Goths and Vandals, which must have been in the apprehension of Niebuhr. There are Vandals on northern thrones, anxious for nothing

* *Gaoler.*—For look you, sir: you know not which way you shall go.

Posthumus.—Yes, indeed, do I, fellow.

Gaoler.—Your death has eyes in's head, then: I have not seen him so pictured. . . . .

Posthumus.—I tell thee, fellow, there are none want eyes to direct them the way I am going, but such as wink, and will not use them.

Gaoler.—What an infinite mock is this, that a man should have the best use of eyes to see the way of blindness!

Cymbeline: Act v. scene 4.

† COLLINS: *Ode on the Manners.*

so much as to extinguish truth and liberty wherever they show themselves—Vandals in the bosom of society everywhere even amongst ourselves, in multitudes, with precisely the same aim, only more disguised by knaves, and less understood by dupes.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—And, you may add, Vandals dominating over society throughout half America, who deal with free speech and even the suspicion of free thought, just as the Inquisition dealt with them, only substituting Lynch law and the gallows for a different mockery of justice, ending in fire and faggot.

Mr. Gryll.—I confine my view to Europe. I dread northern monarchy, and southern anarchy; and rabble brutality amongst ourselves, smothered and repressed for the present, but always ready to break out into inextinguishable flame, like hidden fire under treacherous ashes.*

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—In the meantime, we are all pretty comfortable: and sufficient for the day is the evil thereof; which in our case, so far as I can see, happens to be precisely none.

Miss Ilex.—Lord Curryfin seems to be of that opinion, for he has flitted away from the discussion, and is going down a country dance with Miss Niphet.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—He has chosen his time well. He takes care to be her last partner before supper, that he may hand her to the table. But do you observe, how her tragic severity has passed away? She was always pleasant to look on, but it was often like contemplating ideal beauty in an animated statue. Now she is the image of perfect happiness, and irradiates all around her.

Miss Ilex.—How can it be otherwise? The present and the future are all brightness to her. She cannot but reflect their radiance.

Now came the supper, which, as all present had dined early, was unaffectedly welcomed and enjoyed. Lord Curryfin looked carefully to the comfort of his idol, but was unremitting in his attentions to her fair neighbours. After supper, dancing was resumed, with an apparent resolution in the greater portion of the company not to go home till morning

* ——— incedis per ignes
Suppositos cineri doloso
HOR.: *Carm.* l. ii. 1.

Mr. Gryll, Mr. MacBorrowdale, the Reverend Doctor Opimian, and two or three elders of the party, not having had their usual allowance of wine after their early dinner, remained at the supper table over a bowl of punch, which had been provided in ample quantity, and, in the intervals of dancing, circulated, amongst other refreshments, round the sides of the ball-room, where it was gratefully accepted by the gentlemen, and not absolutely disregarded even by the young ladies. This may be conceded on occasion, without admitting Goldoni's facetious position, that a woman, masked and silent, may be known to be English by her acceptance of punch.*

* Lord Runebif, in Venice, meets Rosaura, who is masked, before a *bottega di caffè*. She makes him a curtsey in the English fashion.

Milord.—Madama, molto compita, volete caffè?
Rosaura.—*(Fa cenno di no.)*
Milord.—Cioccolata?
Rosaura.—*(Fa cenno di no.)*
Milord.—Volete ponce?
Rosaura.—*(Fa cenno di sì)*
Milord.—Oh è Inglese.

La Vedova Scaltra, A. iii. S. 10.

He does not offer her tea, which, as a more English drink than either coffee or chocolate, might have entered into rivalry with punch: especially if, as Goldoni represented in another comedy, the English were in the habit of drinking it, not with milk, but with arrack. Lord Arthur calls on his friend Lord Bonfil in the middle of the day, and Lord Bonfil offers him tea, which is placed on the table with sugar and arrack. While they are drinking it, Lord Coubrech enters.

Bonfil.—Favorite, bevete con noi.
Coubrech.—Il tè non si rifiuta.
Artur.—E bevanda salutifera.
Bonfil.—Volete rak?
Coubrech.—Sì, rak.
Bonfil.—Ecco, vi servo.

Pamela Fanciulla, A. i. S. 15.

CHAPTER XXXII.

HOPES AND FEARS.—COMPENSATIONS IN LIFE.—ATHENIAN COMEDY.—MADEIRA AND MUSIC.—CONFIDENCES.

Ὑμεῖς δε, πρέσβεις, χαίρετ', ἐν κακοῖς ὅμως
Ψυχῇ διδόντες ἡδονὴν καθ' ἡμέραν,
Ὡς τοῖς θανοῦσι πλοῦτος οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖ.
The Ghost of Darius to the Chorus, in the Persæ of ÆSCHYLUS.

Farewell, old friends: and even if ills surround you,
Seize every joy the passing day can bring,
For wealth affords no pleasure to the dead.

DOROTHY had begun to hope that Harry's news might be true, but even Harry's sanguineness began to give way: the pertinacity with which the young master remained at home, threw a damp on their expectations. But having once fairly started, in the way of making love on the one side and responding to it on the other, they could not but continue as they had begun, and she permitted him to go on building castles in the air, in which the Christmas of the ensuing year was arrayed in the brightest apparel of fire and festival.

Harry, walking home one afternoon, met the Reverend Doctor Opimian, who was on his way to the Tower, where he purposed to dine and pass the night. Mr. Falconer's absence from the ball had surprised him, especially as Lord Curryfin's rivalry had ceased, and he could imagine no good cause for his not returning to the Grange. The doctor held out his hand to Harry, who returned the grasp most cordially. The doctor asked him, "How he and his six young friends were prospering in their siege of the hearts of the seven sisters."

Harry Hedgerow.—Why, sir, so far as the young ladies are concerned, we have no cause to complain. But we can't make out the young gentleman. He used to sit and read all the morning, at the top of the Tower. Now he goes up the stairs, and after a little while he comes down again, and walks into the forest. Then he goes up stairs again, and down again, and out again. Something must be come to him, and

the only thing we can think of is, that he is crossed in love. And he never gives me a letter or a message to the Grange. So putting all that together, we haven't a merry Christmas, you see, sir.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I see, still harping on a merry Christmas. Let us hope that the next may make amends.

Harry Hedgerow.—Have they a merry Christmas at the Grange, sir?

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Very merry.

Harry Hedgerow.—Then there's nobody crossed in love there, sir.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—That is more than I can say. I cannot answer for others. I am not, and never was, if that is any comfort to you.

Harry Hedgerow.—It is a comfort to me to see you, and hear the sound of your voice, sir. It always does me good.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Why then, my young friend, you are most heartily welcome to see and hear me whenever you please, if you will come over to the Vicarage. And you will always find a piece of cold roast beef and a tankard of good ale; and just now a shield of brawn. There is some comfort in them.

Harry Hedgerow.—Ah! thank ye, sir. They are comfortable things in their way. But it isn't for them I should come.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I believe you, my young friend. But a man fights best when he has a good basis of old English fare to stand on, against all opposing forces, whether of body or mind. Come and see me. And whatever happens in this world, never let it spoil your dinner.

Harry Hedgerow.—That's father's advice, sir. But it won't always do. When he lost mother, that spoiled his dinner for many a day. He has never been the same man since, though he bears up as well as he can. But if I could take Miss Dorothy home to him, I'm sure that would all but make him young again. And if he had a little Harry to dandle next Christmas, wouldn't he give him the first spoonful out of the marrow-bone!

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I doubt if that would be good food for little Harry, notwithstanding it was Hector's way of feeding Astyanax.* But we may postpone the discussion of

* *Il.* xxii. vv. 500, 501.

his diet till he makes his appearance. In the meantime, live in hope; but live on beef and ale.

The doctor again shook him heartily by the hand, and Harry took his leave.

The doctor walked on, soliloquizing as usual. "This young man's father has lost a good wife, and has never been the same man since. If he had had a bad wife, he would have felt it as a happy release. This life has strange compensations. It helps to show the truth of Juvenal's remark, that the gods alone know what is good for us.* Now, here again is my friend at the Tower. If he had not, as I am sure he has, the love of Morgana, he would console himself with his Vestals. If he had not their sisterly affection, he would rejoice in the love of Morgana, but having both the love and the affection, he is between two counter-attractions, either of which would make him happy, and both together make him miserable. Who can say which is best for him? or for them? or for Morgana herself? I almost wish the light of her favour had shone on Lord Curryfin. That chance has passed from her; and she will not easily find such another. Perhaps she might have held him in her bonds, if she had been so disposed. But Miss Niphet is a glorious girl, and there is a great charm in such perfect reciprocity. Jupiter himself, as I have before had occasion to remark, must have pre-arranged their consentaneity. The young lord went on some time, adhering, as he supposed, to his first pursuit, and falling unconsciously and inextricably into the second: and the young lady went on, devoting her whole heart and soul to him, not clearly perhaps knowing it herself, but certainly not suspecting that any one else could dive into the heart of her mystery. And now they both seem surprised that nobody seems surprised at their sudden appearance in the character of affianced lovers. His is another example of strange compensation; for if Morgana had accepted him on his first offer, Miss Niphet would not have thought of him; but she found him a waif and stray, a flotsome on the waters of love, and landed him at her feet without art or stratagem. Artlessness and simplicity triumphed, where the deepest design would have failed. I do not know if she had any compensation to look for; but if she had, she has found it; for never was a

* JUVENAL: *Sat.* x. v. 346, sqq.

man with more qualities for domestic happiness, and not Pedro of Portugal himself was more overwhelmingly in love. When I first knew him, I saw only the comic side of his character: he has a serious one too, and not the least agreeable part of it: but the comic still shows itself. I cannot well define whether his exuberant good-humour is contagious, and makes me laugh by anticipation as soon as I fall into his company, or whether it is impossible to think of him, gravely lecturing on Fish, as a member of the Pantopragmatic Society, without perceiving a ludicrous contrast between his pleasant social face and the unpleasant social impertinence of those would-be meddlers with everything. It is true, he has renounced that folly; but it is not so easy to dissociate him from the recollection. No matter: if I laugh, he laughs with me: if he laughs, I laugh with him. "Laugh when you can," is a good maxim: between well-disposed sympathies a very little cause strikes out the fire of merriment—

> As long liveth the merry man, they say,
> As doth the sorry man, and longer by a day.

And a day so acquired is a day worth having. But then—

> Another sayd sawe doth men advise,
> That they be together both merry and wise.*

Very good doctrine, and fit to be kept in mind: but there is much good laughter without much wisdom, and yet with no harm in it."

The doctor was approaching the Tower when he met Mr. Falconer, who had made one of his feverish exits from it, and was walking at double his usual speed. He turned back with the doctor, who having declined taking anything before dinner but a glass of wine and a biscuit, they went up together to the library.

They conversed only on literary subjects. The doctor, though Miss Gryll was uppermost in his mind, determined not to originate a word respecting her, and Mr. Falconer, though she was also his predominant idea, felt that it was only over a bottle of Madeira he could unbosom himself freely to the doctor.

* These two quotations are from the oldest comedy in the English language: *Ralph Roister Doister*, 1566. Republished by the Shakspeare Society, 1847.

The doctor asked, "What he had been reading of late?" He said, "I have tried many things, but I have always returned to *Orlando Innamorato*. There it is on the table, an old edition of the original poem." The doctor said, "I have seen an old edition, something like this, on the drawing-room table at the Grange." He was about to say something touching sympathy in taste, but he checked himself in time. The two younger sisters brought in lights. "I observe," said the doctor, "that your handmaids always move in pairs. My hot water for dressing is always brought by two inseparables, whom it seems profanation to call housemaids."

Mr. Falconer.—It is always so on my side of the house, that not a breath of scandal may touch their reputation. If you were to live here from January to December, with a houseful of company, neither you, nor I, nor any of my friends, would see one of them alone for a single minute.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I approve the rule. I would stake my life on the conviction that these sisters are

> Pure as the new-fall'n snow,
> When never yet the sullying sun
> Has seen its purity,
> Nor the warm zephyr touched and tainted it.*

But as the world is constituted, the most perfect virtue needs to be guarded from suspicion. I cannot, however, associate your habits with a houseful of company.

Mr. Falconer.—There must be sympathies enough in the world to make up society for all tastes: more difficult to find in some cases than in others; but still always within the possibility of being found. I contemplated, when I arranged this house, the frequent presence of a select party. The Aristophanic comedy and its adjuncts brought me into pleasant company elsewhere. I have postponed the purpose, not abandoned it.

Several thoughts passed through the doctor's mind. He was almost tempted to speak them. "How beautiful was Miss Gryll in Circe; how charmingly she acted. What was a select party without women? And how could a bachelor invite them?" But this would be touching a string which he had determined not to be the first to strike. So, *apropos* of the Aristophanic comedy, he took down Aristophanes, and

* SOUTHEY: *Thalaba.*

said, "What a high idea of Athenian comedy is given by this single line, in which the poet opines, "The bringing out of comedy to be the most difficult of all arts."* It would not seem to be a difficult art now-a-days, seeing how much new comedy is nightly produced in London, and still more in Paris, which, whatever may be its literary value, amuses its audiences as much as Aristophanes amused the Athenians.

Mr. Falconer.—There is this difference, that though both audiences may be equally amused, the Athenians felt they had something to be proud of in the poet, which our audiences can scarcely feel, as far as novelties are concerned. And as to the atrocious outrages on taste and feeling perpetrated under the name of burlesques, I should be astonished if even those who laugh at them could look back on their amusement with any other feeling than that of being most heartily ashamed of the author, the theatre, and themselves.

When the dinner was over, and a bottle of claret had been placed by the side of the doctor, and a bottle of Madeira by the side of his host, who had not been sparing during dinner of his favourite beverage, which had been to him for some days, like ale to the Captain and his friends in Beaumont and Fletcher,† almost "his eating and his drinking solely," the doctor said, "I am glad to perceive that you keep up your practice of having a good dinner; though I am at the same time sorry to see that you have not done your old justice to it."

Mr. Falconer.—A great philosopher had seven friends, one of whom dined with him in succession on each day of the week. He directed, amongst his last dispositions, that during six months after his death the establishment of his house should be kept on the same footing, and that a dinner should be daily provided for himself and his single guest of the day, who was to be entreated to dine there in memory of him, with one of his executors (both philosophers) to represent him in doing the honours of the table alternately.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I am happy to see that the honours of your table are done by yourself, and not by an executor, administrator, or assign. The honours are done admirably,

* Κωμῳδοδιδασκαλίαν εἶναι χαλεπώτατον ἔργον ἁπάντων.—*Equites.*

† Ale is their eating and their drinking solely.
Scornful Lady, Act iv. Scene ii.

but the old justice on your side is wanting. I do not, however, clearly see what the *feralis cœna* of guest and executor has to do with the dinner of two living men.

Mr. Falconer.—Ah, doctor, you should say one living man and a ghost. I am only the ghost of myself. I do the honours of my departed conviviality.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I thought something was wrong; but whatever it may be, take Horace's advice—"Alleviate every ill with wine and song, the sweet consolations of deforming anxiety."*

Mr. Falconer.—I do, doctor. Madeira, and the music of the Seven Sisters, are my consolations, and great ones; but they do not go down to the hidden care that gnaws at the deepest fibres of the heart, like Ratatosk at the roots of the Ash of Ygdrasil.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—In the Scandinavian mythology: one of the most poetical of all mythologies. I have a great respect for Odin and Thor. Their adventures have always delighted me; and the system was admirably adapted to foster the high spirit of a military people. Lucan has a fine passage on the subject.†

The doctor repeated the passage of Lucan with great emphasis. This was not what Mr. Falconer wanted. He had wished that the doctor should inquire into the cause of his trouble; but independently of the doctor's determination to ask no questions, and to let his young friend originate his own disclosures, the unlucky metaphor had carried the doctor into one of his old fields, and if it had not been that he awaited the confidence, which he felt sure his host would spontaneously repose in him, the Scandinavian mythology would have formed his subject for the evening. He paused, therefore, and went on quietly sipping his claret.

Mr. Falconer could restrain himself no longer, and without preface or note of preparation, he communicated to the doctor all that had passed between Miss Gryll and himself, not omitting a single word of the passages of Bojardo, which were indelibly impressed on his memory.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I cannot see what there is to afflict

* Illic omne malum vino cantuque levato,
Deformis ægrimoniæ dulcibus alloquiis.
Epod. 13.

† *Pharsalia*, l. i. vv. 458—462.

you in all this. You are in love with Miss Gryll. She is disposed to receive you favourably. What more would you wish in that quarter?

Mr. Falconer.—No more in that quarter, but the Seven Sisters are as sisters to me. If I had seven real sisters, the relationship would subsist, and marriage would not interfere with it; but, be a woman as amiable, as liberal, as indulgent, as confiding as she may, she could not treat the unreal, as she would the real tie.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I admit, it is not to be expected. Still there is one way out of the difficulty. And that is by seeing all the seven happily married.

Mr. Falconer.—All the seven married? Surely that is impossible.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—Not so impossible as you apprehend.

The doctor thought it a favourable opportunity to tell the story of the seven suitors, and was especially panegyrical on Harry Hedgerow, observing, that if the maxim *Noscitur à sociis* might be reversed, and a man's companions judged by himself, it would be a sufficient recommendation of the other six; whom, moreover, the result of his inquiries had given him ample reason to think well of. Mr. Falconer received with pleasure at Christmas, a communication which at the Midsummer preceding would have given him infinite pain. It struck him all at once, that, as he had dined so ill, he would have some partridges for supper, his larder being always well stocked with game. They were presented accordingly, after the usual music in the drawing-room, and the doctor, though he had dined well, considered himself bound in courtesy to assist in their disposal; when recollecting how he had wound up the night of the ball, he volunteered to brew a bowl of punch, over which they sate till a late hour, discoursing of many things, but chiefly of Morgana.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE CONQUEST OF THEBES.

Ἦ σοφός ἡ σοφὸς ἦν,
Ὅς πρῶτος ἐν γνώμᾳ τόδ' ἐβάστασε,
Καὶ γλώσσᾳ ἐιεμυθολόγησεν,
Ὡς τὸ κηδεῦσαι καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἀριστεύει μακρῷ·
Καὶ μήτε τῶν πλούτῳ ξιαθρυπτομένων,
Μήτε τῶν γέννᾳ μεγαλυνομένων,
Ὄντα χερνήταν ἐραστεῦσαι γάμων.
ÆSCHYLUS: *Prometheus.*

Oh! wise was he, the first who taught
This lesson of observant thought,
That equal fates alone may dress
The bowers of nuptial happiness;
That never, where ancestral pride
Inflames, or affluence rolls its tide,
Should love's ill-omened bonds entwine
The offspring of an humbler line.

MR. FALCONER, the next morning, after the doctor had set out on his return walk, departed from his usual practice of not seeing one of the sisters alone, and requested that Dorothy would come to him in the drawing-room. She appeared before him, blushing and trembling.

"Sit down," he said, "dear Dorothy; I have something to say to you and your sisters; but I have reasons for saying it first to you. It is probable, at any rate possible, that I shall very soon marry, and perhaps, in that case, you may be disposed to do the same. And I am told, that one of the best young men I have ever known is dying for love of you."

"He is a good young man, that is certain," said Dorothy; then becoming suddenly conscious of how much she had undesignedly admitted, she blushed deeper than before. And by way of mending the matter, she said, "but I am not dying for love of him."

"I dare say you are not," said Mr. Falconer; "you have no cause to be so, as you are sure of him, and only your consent is wanting."

"And yours," said Dorothy, "and that of my sisters; especially my elder sisters; indeed, they ought to set the example."

"I am not sure of that," said Mr. Falconer. "So far, if

I understand rightly, they have followed yours. It was your lover's indefatigable devotion that brought together suitors to them all. As to my consent, that you shall certainly have. So the next time you see Master Harry, send him to me."

"He is here now," said Dorothy.

"Then ask him to come in," said Mr. Falconer.

And Dorothy retired in some confusion. But her lips could not contradict her heart. Harry appeared.

Mr. Falconer.—So, Harry, you have been making love in my house, without asking my leave.

Harry Hedgerow.—I couldn't help making love, sir; and I didn't ask your leave, because I thought I shouldn't get it.

Mr. Falconer.—Candid, as usual, Harry. But do you think Dorothy would make a good farmer's wife?

Harry Hedgerow.—I think, sir, she is so good, and so clever, and so ready and willing to turn her hand to anything, that she would be a fit wife for anybody, from a lord downwards. But it may be most for her own happiness to keep in the class in which she was born.

Mr. Falconer.—She is not very pretty, you know.

Harry Hedgerow.—Not pretty, sir! If she isn't a beauty, I don't know who is.

Mr. Falconer.—Well, no doubt, she is a handsome girl.

Harry Hedgerow.—Handsome is not the thing, sir. She's beautiful.

Mr. Falconer.—Well, Harry, she is beautiful, if that will please you.

Harry Hedgerow.—It does please me, sir. I ought to have known you were joking when you said she was not pretty.

Mr. Falconer.—But, you know, she has no fortune.

Harry Hedgerow.—I don't want fortune. I want her, and nothing else, and nobody else.

Mr. Falconer.—But I cannot consent to her marrying without a fortune of her own.

Harry Hedgerow.—Why, then, I'll give her one beforehand. Father has saved some money, and she shall have that. We'll settle it on her, as the lawyers say.

Mr. Falconer.—You are a thoroughly good fellow, Harry, and I really wish Dorothy joy of her choice; but that is not what I meant. She must bring you a fortune, not take one from you; and you must not refuse it.

Harry repeated that he did not want fortune; and Mr.

Falconer repeated that, so far as depended on him, he should not have Dorothy without one. It was not an arduous matter to bring to an amicable settlement.

The affair of Harry and Dorothy being thus satisfactorily arranged, the other six were adjusted with little difficulty; and Mr. Falconer returned with a light heart to the Grange, where he presented himself at dinner on the twenty-seventh day of his probation.

He found much the same party as before; for though some of them absented themselves for a while, they could not resist Mr. Gryll's earnest entreaties to return. He was cordially welcomed by all, and with a gracious smile from Morgana.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CHRISTMAS TALES.—CLASSICAL TALES OF WONDER.—THE HOST'S GHOST.—A TALE OF A SHADOW.—A TALE OF A BOGLE.—THE LEGEND OF ST. LAURA.

> *Jane.* . . . . We'll draw round
> The fire, and grandmamma perhaps will tell us
> One of her stories.
> *Harry.* Ay, dear grandmamma!
> A pretty story! something dismal now!
> A bloody murder.
> *Jane.* Or about a ghost.
> SOUTHEY: *The Grandmother's Tale.*

IN the evening Miss Gryll said to the doctor,

"We have passed Christmas without a ghost story. This is not as it should be. One evening at least of Christmas ought to be devoted to *merveilleuses histoires racontées autour du foyer;* which Chateaubriand enumerates among the peculiar enjoyments of those *qui n'ont pas quitté leur pays natal.* You must have plenty of ghosts in Greek and Latin, doctor."

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—No doubt. All literature abounds with ghosts. But there are not many classical ghosts that would make a Christmas tale according to the received notion of a ghost story. The ghosts of Patroclus in Homer, of Darius in Æschylus, of Polydorus in Euripides, are fine poetical ghosts: but none of them would make a ghost story.

I can only call to mind one such story in Greek: but even that, as it has been turned into ballads by Goethe, in the *Bride of Corinth*, and by Lewis, in the *Gay Gold Ring*,* would not be new to any one here. There are some classical tales of wonder, not ghost stories, but suitable Christmas tales. There are two in Petronius, which I once amused myself by translating as closely as possible to the originals, and, if you please, I will relate them as I remember them. For I hold with Chaucer:

> Whoso shall telle a tale after a man,
> He moste reherse, as nigh as ever he can,
> Everich word, if it be in his charge,
> All speke he never so rudely and so large:

* Lewis says, in a note on the *Gay Gold Ring*:—"I once read in some Grecian author, whose name I have forgotten, the story which suggested to me the outline of the foregoing ballad. It was as follows: a young man arriving at the house of a friend, to whose daughter he was betrothed, was informed that some weeks had passed since death had deprived him of his intended bride. Never having seen her, he soon reconciled himself to her loss, especially as, during his stay at his friend's house, a young lady was kind enough to visit him every night in his chamber, whence she retired at day-break, always carrying with her some valuable present from her lover. This intercourse continued till accident showed the young man the picture of his deceased bride, and he recognized, with horror, the features of his nocturnal visitor. The young lady's tomb being opened, he found in it the various presents which his liberality had bestowed on his unknown *innamorata*."—M. G. Lewis: *Tales of Wonder*, v. i. p. 99.

The Greek author here alluded to was Plegon, whom some assign to the age of Augustus, and others, more correctly, to that of Hadrian. He wrote a treatise, Περὶ θαυμασίων: *On Wonderful Things*. The first, in what remains of the treatise, is the story in question, and the beginning of the story is lost. There is no picture in the case. The lover and his nocturnal visitor had interchanged presents, and the parents recognized those which had belonged to their daughter: a gold ring, and a neckerchief. They surprised their daughter on her third nightly visit, and she said to them:—"Oh, mother and father! how unjustly have you envied me the passing three days with your guest under my paternal roof. Now deeply will you lament your curiosity. I return to my destined place: for not without divine will came I hither." Having spoken thus, she fell immediately dead. The tomb was opened, and they found an iron ring and a gilt cup, which she had received from her lover: who, in grief and horror, put an end to his life. It appears to be implied, that, if the third night had passed like the two preceding, she would have regained her life, and been restored to her parents and bridegroom.

Or elles he moste tellen his tale untrewe,
Or feinen things, or finden wordes newe.*

This proposal being received with an unanimous "By all means, doctor," the doctor went on:

"These stories are told at the feast of Trimalchio: the first by Niceros, a freedman, one of the guests:

"While I was yet serving, we lived in a narrow street, where now is the house of Gavilla. There, as it pleased the gods, I fell in love with the wife of Terentius, the tavern-keeper—Melissa Tarentiana—many of you knew her, a most beautiful kiss-thrower."

Miss Gryll.—That is an odd term, doctor.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—It relates, I imagine, to some graceful gesture of pantomimic dancing: for beautiful hostesses were often accomplished dancers. Virgil's Copa, which, by-the-way, is only half panegyrical, gives us, nevertheless, a pleasant picture in this kind. It seems to have been one of the great attractions of a Roman tavern: and the host, in looking out for a wife, was probably much influenced by her possession of this accomplishment. The dancing, probably, was of that kind which the moderns call *demi-caractère*, and was performed in picturesque costume. . . .

The doctor would have gone off in a dissertation on dancing hostesses, but Miss Gryll recalled him to the story, which he continued, in the words of Niceros:

"But, by Hercules, mine was pure love; her manners charmed me, and her friendliness. If I wanted money, if she had earned an *as*, she gave me a *semis*. If I had money, I gave it into her keeping. Never was woman more trustworthy. Her husband died at a farm, which they possessed in the country. I left no means untried to visit her in her distress; for friends are shown in adversity. It so happened, that my master had gone to Capua, to dispose of some cast-off finery. Seizing the opportunity, I persuaded a guest of ours to accompany me to the fifth milestone. He was a soldier, strong as Pluto. We set off before cock-crow; the moon shone like day; we passed through a line of tombs. My man began some ceremonies before the pillars. I sat down, singing, and counting the stars. Then, as I looked round to my comrade, he stripped himself, and laid his

* *Canterbury Tales*, vv. 733—738.

clothes by the wayside. My heart was in my nose: I could no more move than a dead man. But he walked three times round his clothes, and was suddenly changed into a wolf. Do not think I am jesting. No man's patrimony would tempt me to lie. But, as I had begun to say, as soon as he was changed into a wolf, he set up a long howl, and fled into the woods. I remained awhile, bewildered; then I approached to take up his clothes, but they were turned into stone. Who was dying of fear but I? But I drew my sword, and went on cutting shadows till I arrived at the farm. I entered the narrow way. The life was half boiled out of me; perspiration ran down me like a torrent: my eyes were dead. I could scarcely come to myself. My Melissa began to wonder why I walked so late; "and if you had come sooner," she said, "you might at least have helped us; for a wolf entered the farm and fell on the sheep, tearing them, and leaving them all bleeding. He escaped; but with cause to remember us; for our man drove a spear through his neck." When I heard these things, I could not think of sleep; but hurried homeward with the dawn; and when I came to the place where the clothes had been turned into stone, I found nothing but blood. When I reached home, my soldier was in bed, lying like an ox, and a surgeon was dressing his neck. I felt that he was a turnskin, and I could never after taste bread with him, not if you would have killed me. Let those who doubt of such things look into them. If I lie, may the wrath of all your Genii fall on me."

This story being told, Trimalchio, the lord of the feast, after giving his implicit adhesion to it, and affirming the indisputable veracity of Niceros, relates another, as a fact of his own experience.

"While yet I wore long hair, for from a boy I led a Chian life,* our little Iphis, the delight of the family, died; by Hercules, a pearl; quick, beautiful, one of ten thousand. While, therefore, his unhappy mother was weeping for him, and we all were plunged in sorrow, suddenly witches came in pursuit of him, as dogs, you may suppose, of a hare. We had then in the house a Cappadocian, tall, brave to audacity, capable of lifting up an angry bull. He boldly, with a

* Free boys wore long hair. A Chian life is a delicate and luxurious life. Trimalchio implies that, though he began life as a slave, he was a pet in the household, and was treated as if he had been free.

drawn sword, rushed out through the gate, having his left hand carefully wrapped up, and drove his sword through a woman's bosom; here as it were; safe be what I touch! We heard a groan; but, assuredly, I will not lie, we did not see the women. But our stout fellow returning, threw himself into bed, and all his body was livid, as if he had been beaten with whips; for the evil hand had touched him. We closed the gate, and resumed our watch over the dead; but when the mother went to embrace the body of her son, she touched it, and found it was only a figure, of which all the interior was straw, no heart, nothing. The witches had stolen away the boy, and left in his place a straw-stuffed image. I ask you—it is impossible not—to believe, that there are women with more than mortal knowledge, nocturnal women, who can make that which is uppermost downmost. But our tall hero after this was never again of his own colour; indeed, after a few days, he died raving."

"We wondered and believed," says a guest who heard the story, "and kissing the table, we implored the nocturnals to keep themselves to themselves, while we were returning from supper."

Miss Gryll.—Those are pleasant stories, doctor; and the peculiar style of the narrators testifies to their faith in their own marvels. Still, as you say, they are not ghost stories.

Lord Curryfin.—Shakspeare's are glorious ghosts, and would make good stories, if they were not so familiarly known. There is a ghost much to my mind in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Lover's Progress*. Cleander has a beautiful wife, Calista, and a friend, Lisander. Calista and Lisander love each other, *en tout bien, tout honneur*. Lisander, in self-defence and in fair fight, kills a court favourite, and is obliged to conceal himself in the country. Cleander and Dorilaus, Calista's father, travel in search of him. They pass the night at a country inn. The jovial host had been long known to Cleander, who had extolled him to Dorilaus; but on inquiring for him they find he has been dead three weeks. They call for more wine, dismiss their attendants, and sit up alone, chatting of various things, and, among others, of mine host, whose skill on the lute and in singing is remembered and commended by Cleander. While they are talking, a lute is struck within; followed by a song, beginning,

'Tis late and cold, stir up the fire,—
Sit close, and draw the table nigher:
Be merry, and drink wine that's old.

And ending:—

Welcome, welcome, shall go round,
And I shall smile, though underground.

And when the song ceases, the host's ghost enters. They ask him why he appears? He answers, to wait once more on Cleander, and to entreat a courtesy:—

——— to see my body buried
In holy ground: for now I lie unhallowed,
By the clerk's fault: let my new grave be made
Amongst good fellows, that have died before me,
And merry hosts of my kind.

Cleander promises that it shall be done; and Dorilaus, who is a merry old gentleman throughout the play, adds:—

And forty stoops of wine drank at thy funeral.

Cleander asks him:—

Is't in your power, some hours before my death,
To give me warning?

The host replies:—

I cannot tell you truly:
But if I can, so much on earth I loved you,
I will appear again.

In a subsequent scene, the ghost forewarns him, and he is soon after assassinated: not premeditatedly, but as an accident in the working out, by subordinate characters, of a plot to bring into question the purity of Calista's love for Lisander.

Miss Ilex.—In my young days ghosts were so popular, that the first question asked about any new play was, Is there a ghost in it? The *Castle Spectre* had set this fashion. It was one of the first plays I saw, when I was a very little girl. The opening of the folding-doors disclosing the illuminated oratory; the extreme beauty of the actress who personated the ghost; the solemn music to which she moved slowly forward to give a silent blessing to her kneeling daughter; and the chorus of female voices chanting *Jubilate;* made an impression on me which no other scene of the kind has ever made. That is my ghost, but I have no ghost story worth telling.

Mr. Falconer.—There are many stories in which the supernatural is only apparent, and is finally explained. But some of these, especially the novels of Brockden Brown, carry the principle of terror to its utmost limits. What can be more appalling than his *Wieland?* It is one of the few tales in which the final explanation of the apparently supernatural does not destroy or diminish the original effect.

Miss Gryll.—Generally, I do not like that explaining away. I can accord a ready faith to the supernatural in all its forms, as I do to the adventures of Ulysses and Orlando. I should be sorry to see the enchantments of Circe expounded into sleights of hand.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—I agree with you, Miss Gryll. I do not like to find a ghost, which has frightened me through two volumes, turned into a Cock Lane ghost in the third.

Miss Gryll.—We are talking about ghosts, but we have not a ghost story. I want a ghost story.

Miss Niphet.—I will try to tell you one, which I remember imperfectly. It relates, as many such stories do, to a buried treasure. An old miser had an only daughter; he denied himself everything, but he educated her well, and treated her becomingly. He had accumulated a treasure, which he designed for her, but could not bear the thought of parting with it, and died without disclosing the place of its concealment. The daughter had a lover, not absolutely poor, nor much removed from it. He farmed a little land of his own. When her father died, and she was left destitute and friendless, he married her, and they endeavoured by economy and industry to make up for the deficiencies of fortune. The young husband had an aunt, with whom they sometimes passed a day of festival, and Christmas Day especially. They were returning home late at night on one of these occasions; snow was on the ground; the moon was in the first quarter, and nearly setting. Crossing a field, they paused a moment to look on the beauty of the starry sky; and when they again turned their eyes to the ground, they saw a shadow on the snow; it was too long to have any distinct outline; but no substantial form was there to throw it. The young wife clung trembling to the arm of her husband. The moon set, and the shadow disappeared. New Year's Day came, and they passed it at the aunt's. On their return the moon was

full, and high in heaven. They crossed the same field, not without hesitation and fear. In the same spot as before, they again saw the shadow; it was that of a man in a large loose wrapper, and a high-peaked hat. They recognized the outline of the old miser. The husband sustained his nearly fainting wife; as their eyes were irresistibly fixed on it, it began to move, but a cloud came over the moon, and they lost sight of it. The next night was bright, and the wife had summoned all her courage to follow out the mystery; they returned to the spot at the same hour; the shadow again fell on the snow, and again it began to move, and glided away slowly over the surface of the snow. They followed it fearfully. At length it stopped on a small mound in another field of their own farm. They walked round and round it, but it moved no more. The husband entreated his wife to remain, while he sought a stick to mark the place. When she was alone, the shadow spread out its arms as in the act of benediction, and vanished. The husband found her extended on the snow; he raised her in his arms; she recovered, and they walked home. He returned in the morning with pick-axe and spade, cleared away the snow, broke into the ground, and found a pot of gold, which was unquestionably their own. And then, with the usual end of a nurse's tale, "they lived happily all the rest of their lives."

Miss Ilex.—Your story, though differing in all other respects, reminds me of a ballad in which there is a shadow on the snow,

> Around it, and round, he had ventured to go,
> But no form that had life threw that stamp on the snow.*

Mr. Gryll.—In these instances, the shadow has an outline, without a visible form to throw it. I remember a striking instance of shadows without distinguishable forms. A young chevalier was riding through a forest of pines, in which he had before met with fearful adventures, when a strange voice called on him to stop. He did not stop, and the stranger jumped up behind him. He tried to look back, but could not turn his head. They emerged into a glade, where he hoped to see in the moonlight the outline of the unwelcome form. But "unaccountable shadows fell around, unstamped with delineations of themselves."†

* Miss Bannerman's *Tales of Superstition and Chivalry.*
† *The Three Brothers*, vol. iv. p. 193.

Miss Gryll.—Well, Mr. MacBorrowdale, have you no ghost story for us?

Mr. MacBorrowdale.—In faith, Miss Gryll, ghosts are not much in my line: the main business of my life has been among the direst matters of fact: but I will tell you a tale of a bogle, which I remember from my boyish days.

There was a party of witches and warlocks assembled in the refectory of a ruined abbey, intending to have a merry supper, if they could get the materials. They had no money, and they had for servant a poor bogle, who had been lent to them by his Satanic majesty, on condition that he should provide their supper if he could; but without buying or stealing. They had a roaring fire, with nothing to roast, and a large stone table, with nothing on it but broken dishes and empty mugs. So the firelight shone on an uncouth set of long hungry faces. Whether there was among them "ae winsom wench and wawlie,"* is more than I can say; but most probably there was, or the bogle would scarcely have been so zealous in the cause. Still he was late on his quest. The friars of a still flourishing abbey were making preparations for a festal day, and had despatched a man with a cart to the nearest town, to bring them a supply of good things. He was driving back his cart well loaded with beef, and poultry, and ham; and a supply of choice rolls, for which a goodwife in the town was famous; and a new arrival of rare old wine, a special present to the Abbot from some great lord. The bogle having smelt out the prize, presented himself before the carter in the form of a sailor with a wooden leg, imploring charity. The carter said he had nothing for him, and the sailor seemed to go on his way. He re-appeared in various forms, always soliciting charity, more and more importunately every time, and always receiving the same denial. At last he appeared as an old woman, leaning on a stick, who was more pertinacious in her entreaties than the preceding semblances; and the carter, after asseverating with an oath, that a whole shipload of beggars must have been wrecked that night on the coast, reiterated that he had nothing for her. "Only the smallest coin, master," said the old woman. "I

* But Tam kend what was what fu' brawlie:
There was ae winsome wench and wawlie,
That night enlisted in the core,
Lang after kend on Carrick shore.—*Tam O'Shanter.*

have no coin," said the carter. "Just a wee bite and sup of something," said the old woman; "you are scarcely going about without something to eat and drink; something comfortable for yourself. Just look in the cart: I am sure you will find something good." "Something, something, something," said the carter; "if there is anything fit to eat or drink in the cart, I wish a bogle may fly away with it." "Thank you," said the bogle, and changed himself into a shape which laid the carter on his back, with his heels in the air. The bogle made lawful prize of the contents of the cart. The refectory was soon fragrant with the odour of roast, and the old wine flowed briskly, to the great joy of the assembly, who passed the night in feasting, singing, and dancing, and toasting Old Nick.

Miss Gryll.—And now, Mr. Falconer, you who live in an old tower, among old books, and are deep in the legends of saints, surely you must have a ghost story to tell us.

Mr. Falconer.—Not exactly a ghost story, Miss Gryll, but there is a legend which took my fancy, and which I turned into a ballad. If you permit me, I will repeat it.

The permission being willingly granted, Mr. Falconer closed the series of fireside marvels by reciting

THE LEGEND OF SAINT LAURA.

Saint Laura, in her sleep of death,
Preserves beneath the tomb
—'Tis willed where what is willed must be—*
In incorruptibility
Her beauty and her bloom.

So pure her maiden life had been,
So free from earthly stain,
'Twas fixed in fate by Heaven's own Queen,
That till the earth's last closing scene
She should unchanged remain.

Within a deep sarcophagus
Of alabaster sheen,
With sculptured lid of roses white,
She slumbered in unbroken night,
By mortal eyes unseen.

Above her marble couch was reared
A monumental shrine,
Where cloistered sisters, gathering round,
Made night and morn the aisle resound
With choristry divine.

* Vuolsi così colà dove si puote
Ciò che si vuole, e più non domandare.—DANTE.

The abbess died: and in her pride
Her parting mandate said,
They should her final rest provide,
The alabaster couch beside,
Where slept the sainted dead.

The abbess came of princely race:
The nuns might not gainsay:
And sadly passed the timid band,
To execute the high command
They dared not disobey.

The monument was opened then:
It gave to general sight
The alabaster couch alone:
But all its lucid substance shone
With preternatural light.

They laid the corpse within the shrine:
They closed its doors again:
But nameless terror seemed to fall,
Throughout the live-long night, on all
Who formed the funeral train.

Lo! on the morrow morn, still closed
The monument was found:
But in its robes funereal drest,
The corpse they had consigned to rest
Lay on the stony ground.

Fear and amazement seized on all:
They called on Mary's aid:
And in the tomb, unclosed again,
With choral hymn and funeral train,
The corpse again was laid.

But with the incorruptible
Corruption might not rest:
The lonely chapel's stone-paved floor
Received the ejected corpse once more,
In robes funereal drest.

So was it found when morning beamed:
In solemn suppliant strain
The nuns implored all saints in heaven,
That rest might to the corpse be given,
Which they entombed again.

On the third night a watch was kept
By many a friar and nun:
Trembling, all knelt in fervent prayer,
Till on the dreary midnight air
Rolled the deep bell-toll, "One!"

The saint within the opening tomb
Like marble statue stood:
All fell to earth in deep dismay:
And through their ranks she passed away,
In calm unchanging mood.

No answering sound her footsteps raised
Along the stony floor:
Silent as death, severe as fate,
She glided through the chapel gate,
And none beheld her more.

The alabaster couch was gone:
The tomb was void and bare:
For the last time, with hasty rite,
Even 'mid the terror of the night,
They laid the abbess there.

'Tis said the abbess rests not well
In that sepulchral pile:
But yearly, when the night comes round
As dies of "One" the bell's deep sound
She flits along the aisle.

But whither passed the virgin saint,
To slumber far away,
Destined by Mary to endure,
Unaltered in her semblance pure,
Until the judgment-day?

None knew, and none may ever know:
Angels the secret keep:
Impenetrable ramparts bound,
Eternal silence dwells around
The chamber of her sleep.

CHAPTER XXV.

REJECTED SUITORS.—CONCLUSION.

Σοὶ δὲ θεοὶ τόσα δοῖεν, ὕσα φρεσὶ σῇσι μενοινᾷς,
Ἄνδρα τε, καὶ οἶκον, καὶ ὁμοφροσύνην ὀπάσειαν
Ἐσθλήν· οὐ μὲν γάρ τοῦ γε κρεῖσσον καὶ ἄρειον,
Ἢ ὅθ' ὁμοφρονέοντε νοήμασιν οἶκον ἔχητον
Ἀνὴρ ἠδὲ γυνή.

May the gods grant what your best hopes pursue,
A husband, and a home, with concord true:
No greater boon from Jove's ethereal dome
Descends, than concord in the nuptial home.
ULYSSES *to* NAUSICAA, *in the sixth book of the Odyssey.*

WHAT passed between Algernon and Morgana, when the twenty-eighth morning brought his probation to a close, it is unnecessary to relate. The gentleman being predetermined to propose, and the lady to accept, there was little to be said, but that little was conclusive.

Mr. Gryll was delighted. His niece could not have made a choice more thoroughly to his mind.

"My dear Morgana," he said, "all's well that ends well. Your fastidiousness in choice has arrived at a happy termination. And now you will perhaps tell me why you rejected so many suitors, to whom you had in turn accorded a hearing. In the first place, what was your objection to the Honourable Escor A'Cass?* He was a fine, handsome, dashing fellow. He was the first in the field, and you seemed to like him."

Miss Gryll.—He was too dashing, uncle: he gambled. I did like him, till I discovered his evil propensity.

Mr. Gryll.—To Sir Alley Capel?

Miss Gryll.—He speculated; which is only another name for gambling. He never knew from day to day whether he was a rich man or a beggar. He lived in a perpetual fever, and I wish to live in tranquillity.

Mr. Gryll.—To Mr. Ballot?

Miss Gryll.—He thought of nothing but politics: he had no feeling of poetry. There was never a more complete negation of sympathy, than between him and me.

Mr. Gryll.—To Sir John Pachyderm?

Miss Gryll.—He was a mere man of the world, with no feeling of any kind: tolerable in company, but tiresome beyond description in a tête-à-tête. I did not choose that he should bestow all his tediousness on me.

Mr. Gryll.—To Mr. Enavant?

Miss Gryll.—He was what is called a fast man, and was always talking of slow coaches. I had no fancy for living in an express train. I like to go quietly through life, and to see all that lies in my way.

Mr. Gryll.—To Mr. Geront?

Miss Gryll.—He had only one fault, but that one was unpardonable. He was too old. To do him justice, he did not begin as a lover. Seeing that I took pleasure in his society, he was led by degrees into fancying that I might accept him as a husband. I liked his temper, his acquirements, his conversation, his love of music and poetry, his devotion to domestic life. But age and youth cannot harmonize in marriage.

Mr. Gryll.—To Mr. Long Owen?

Miss Gryll.—He was in debt, and kept it secret from me.

*'Ες Κόρακος: *To-the-Crows:* the Athenian equivalent for our *o-the-Devil:* a gambler's journey: not often a long one.

I thought he only wanted my fortune: but be that as it might, the concealment destroyed my esteem.

Mr. Gryll.—To Mr. Larvel?

Miss Gryll.—He was too ugly. Expression may make plain features agreeable, and I tried if daily intercourse would reconcile me to his. But no. His ugliness was unredeemed.

Mr. Gryll.—None of these objections applied to Lord Curryfin.

Miss Gryll.—No, uncle; but he came too late. And besides, he soon found what suited him better.

Mr. Gryll.—There were others. Did any of the same objections apply to them all?

Miss Gryll.—Indeed, uncle, the most of them were nothing; or at best, mere suits of good clothes; men made, as it were, to pattern by the dozen; selfish, frivolous, without any earnest pursuit, or desire to have one; ornamental drawing-room furniture, no more distinguishable in memory than a set of chairs.

Mr. Gryll.—Well, my dear Morgana, for mere negations there is no remedy; but for positive errors, even for gambling, it strikes me they are curable.

Miss Gryll.—No, uncle. Even my limited observation has shown me, that men are easily cured of unfashionable virtues, but never of fashionable vices.

Miss Gryll and Miss Niphet arranged that their respective marriages and those of the seven sisters, should be celebrated at the same time and place. In the course of their castle-building before marriage, Miss Niphet said to her intended:

"When I am your wife, I shall release you from your promise of not trying experiments with horses, carriages, boats, and so forth; but with this proviso, that if ever you do try a dangerous experiment, it shall be in my company."

"No, dear Alice," he answered; "you will make my life too dear to me, to risk it in any experiment. You shall be my guiding star, and the only question I shall ask respecting my conduct in life, will be, Whether it pleases you?"

Some natural tears they shed, but wiped them soon;

might have been applied to the sisters, when they stepped, on

their bridal morning, into the carriages which were to convey them to the Grange.

It was the dissipation of a dream too much above mortal frailty, too much above the contingencies of chance and change, to be permanently realized. But the damsels had consented, and the suitors rejoiced; and if ever there was a man on earth with "his saul abune the moon," it was Harry Hedgerow, on the bright February morning that gave him the hand of his Dorothy.

There was a grand *déjeûner* at Gryll Grange. There were the nine brides, and the nine bridegrooms; a beautiful array of bridesmaids; a few friends of Mr. Gryll, Mr. Niphet, Lord Curryfin, and Mr. Falconer; and a large party at the lower end of the hall, composed of fathers, mothers, and sisters of the bridegrooms of the seven Vestals. None of the bridegrooms had brothers, and Harry had neither mother nor sister; but his father was there in rustic portliness, looking, as Harry had anticipated, as if he were all but made young again.

Among the most conspicuous of the party were the Reverend Doctor Opimian and his lady, who had on this occasion stepped out of her domestic seclusion. In due course, the reverend doctor stood up and made a speech, which may be received as the epilogue of our comedy.

The Rev. Dr. Opimian.—We are here to do honour to the nuptials; first, of the niece of our excellent host, a young lady whom to name is to show her title to the love and respect of all present; with a young gentleman, of whom to say that he is in every way worthy of her, is to say all that can be said of him in the highest order of praise: secondly, of a young lord and lady, to whom those who had the pleasure of being here last Christmas are indebted for the large share of enjoyment which their rare and diversified accomplishments, and their readiness to contribute in every way to social entertainment, bestowed on the assembled party; and who, both in contrast and congeniality,—for both these elements enter into perfect fitness of companionship—may be considered to have been expressly formed for each other: thirdly, of seven other young couples, on many accounts most interesting to us all, who enter on the duties of married life, with as fair expectation of happiness as can reasonably be entertained in this diurnal sphere. An old Greek poet says:—"Four things are good for man in this world: first,

health; second, personal beauty; third, riches not dishonourably acquired: fourth, to pass life among friends."* But thereon says the comic poet Anaxandrides: "Health is rightly placed first; but riches should have been second; for what is beauty ragged and starving?"† Be this as it may, we here see them all four; health in its brightest bloom; riches in two instances; more than competence in the other seven; beauty in the brides, good looks, as far as young men need them, in the bridegrooms, and as bright a prospect of passing life among friends as ever shone on any. Most earnestly do I hope that the promise of their marriage morning may be fulfilled in its noon and in its sunset; and when I add, may they all be as happy in their partners as I have been, I say what all who know the excellent person beside me will feel to be the best good wish in my power to bestow. And now, to the health of the brides and bridegrooms, in bumpers of champagne. Let all the attendants stand by, each with a fresh bottle, with only one uncut string. Let all the corks, when I give the signal, be discharged simultaneously; and we will receive it as a peal of Bacchic ordnance, in honour of the Power of Joyful Event,‡ whom we may assume to be presiding on this auspicious occasion.

* Ὑγιαίνειν μὲν ἄριστον ἀνδρὶ θνατῷ·
Δεύτερον δὲ, φυὰν καλὸν γενέσθαι·
Τρίτον δὲ, πλουτεῖν ἀδόλως·
Καὶ τὸ τέταρτον, ἡβᾷν μετὰ τῶν φιλων.
SIMONIDES.

† ATHENÆUS: l. xv. p. 694.

‡ This was a Roman deity. *Invocato hilaro atque prospero Eventu* —APULEIUS: *Metamorph.* l. iv.

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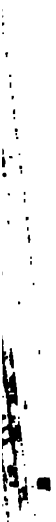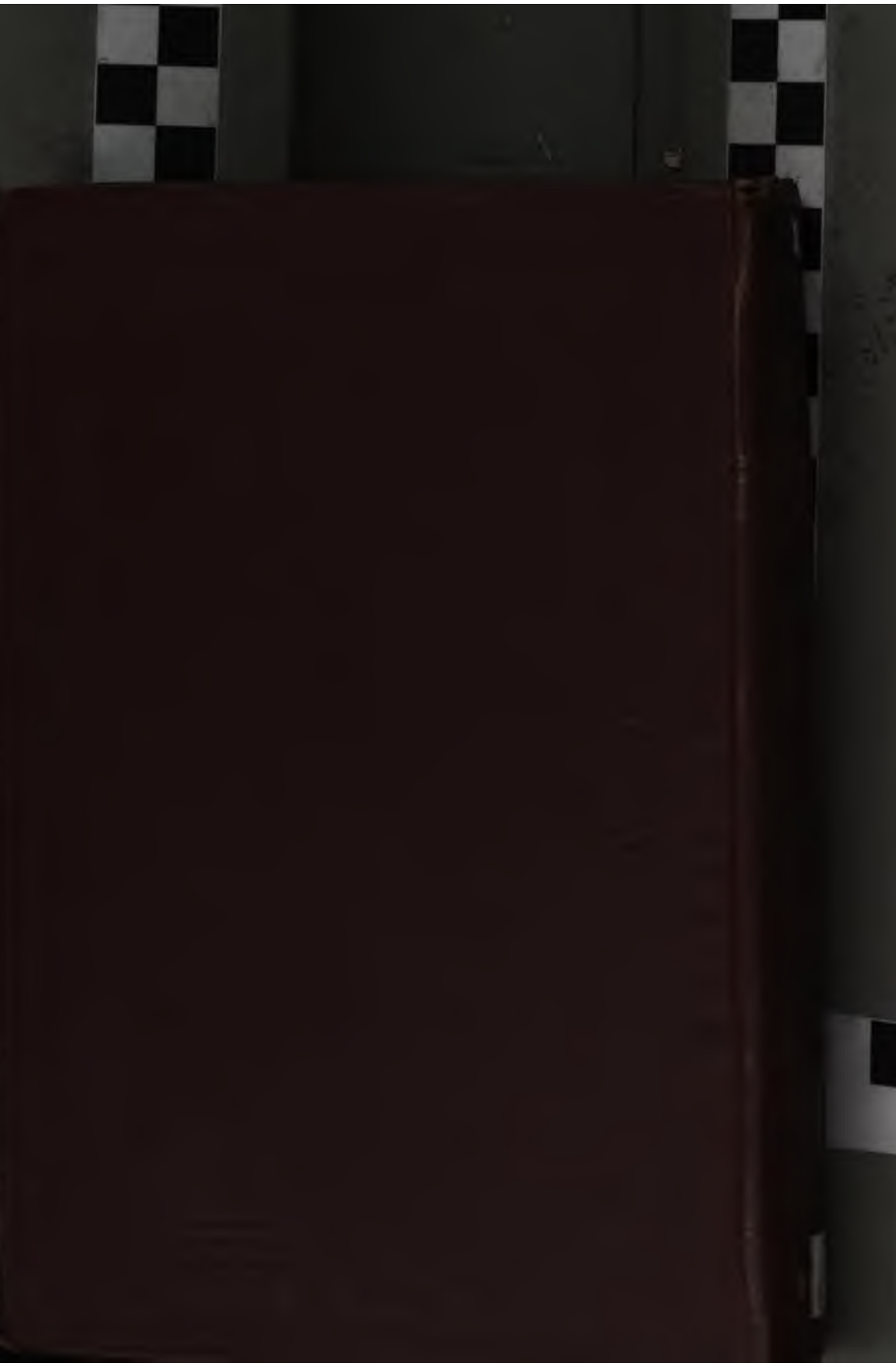
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